cinema canada

NO 69
$1.50

FESTIVAL ROUNDUP MONTREAL, TORONTO, OTTAWA

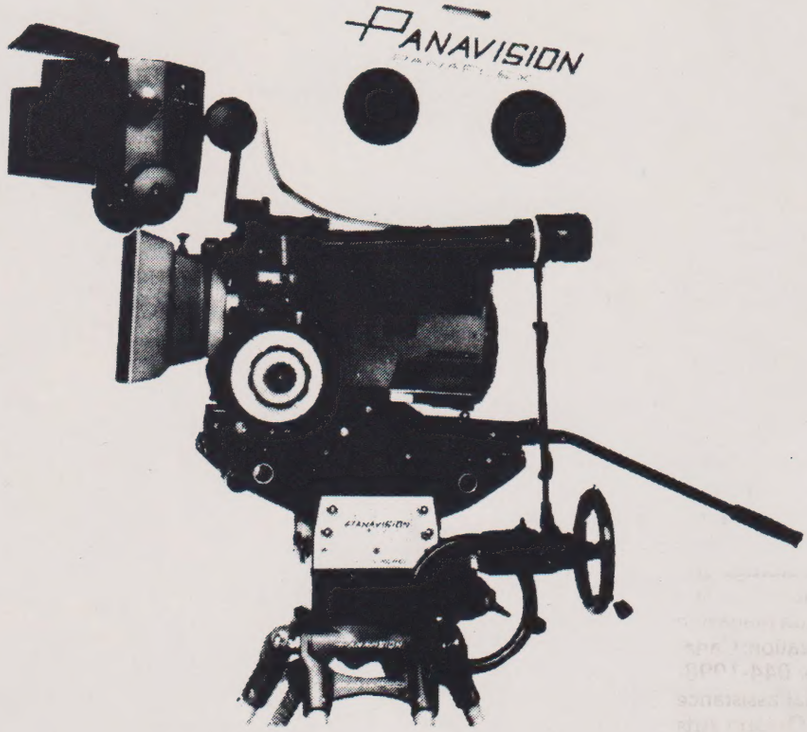
A TIME OF RECKONING TORONTO'S TRADE FORUM

PRODUCERS TAKE CONTROL STANLEY COLBERT

Complete Film Equipment Rental

16mm and 35mm Cameras
Sound and Lighting Equipment
Generators
Sound Studios

Sales
Repairs



PANAVISION
CANADA
LTEE — LTD

2000 Northcliffe Road, Montreal (514) 487-5010
793 Pharmacy Ave., Toronto (416) 752-7670
43 West, 6th Ave, Vancouver (604) 873-3901

October-November 1980
Number 69

NOV 15 1980

Editor/Publisher :
Jean-Pierre & Connie Tadros
Assistant Editor :
Teri Coburn (Montreal)
General Manager :
Del Mehes (Toronto)
Subscriptions :
Diane Neboschizkij (Montreal)
Art Direction :
Claire Baron for Graffitexte
Advertising sales representative :
Gail Walker of Media Budgets
(416) 925-9608
Typesetting :
Concept Mediatexte Inc.

Cinema Canada, founded by the Canadian Society of Cinematographers, is published by the Cinema Canada Magazine Foundation. President: Jean-Pierre Tadros, Vice-President: George Csaba Koller, Secretary-Treasurer: Connie Tadros, Directors : George Campbell Miller **Editorial information** : All manuscripts, drawings and photographs submitted must be accompanied by a self-addressed stamped envelope. While the editors will take all reasonable care, they will not be held responsible for the loss of any such submissions. Opinions expressed within the magazine are those of the author and not necessarily those of the editors. Cinema Canada is indexed in the **Film Literature Index** (Albany), the **Canadian Periodical Index** (Ottawa) and the **International Index to Film Periodicals**. Member of the Canadian Periodical Publishers' Association. No part of this magazine may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means electronic or mechanical, including photo-copying, recording, or by any information storage and retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publisher. Cinema Canada Magazine Foundation is a non-profit organization: Canadian Charitable Organization no. 044-1998-2213. Published with the financial assistance of the Canada Council and the Ontario Arts Council. Second class mail registration no. 3081. ISSN 0009-7071

Subscription rates for ten issues yearly: normal $10.00, institutions $15.00, foreign $12.00. Notice of **change of address** should include your old address as printed on a recent issue. For subscriptions write to Box 398, Station Outremont, Montreal H2V 4N3. Subscriptions are not refundable. Requests for replacement of missing issues will be honored for three months after the due date of the issue.

Toronto office:
67 Portland St.
Toronto, Ont. M5V 2M9
(416) 366-0355

Montreal office:
Box 398, Outremont Station,
Montreal H2V 4N3
(514) 272-5354

CONTENTS

TORONTO FILM SOCIETY

Cover : *Summer means love for Mark Singer and Sarah Torgov from* ***If You Could See What I Hear*** *which just wrapped in Toronto (See page 3).* **photo: Bill Langstroth**

In Progress

2 **Bells** by Fritz Mann
3 **If You Could See What I Hear** by Martin Harbury
5 **The Fright** by Anna Fudakowska

Features

Kevin Tierney — **7** **The World Film Festival of Montreal :** A Time of Transition
Gary Lamphier — **10** **Toronto's Festival of Festivals :** All That Glitters...
Marc Gervais and Robert Verrall — **13** **Tacking into the Wind**
Stanley Colbert — **17** **Credit Where Credit is Due**
Robert James Hookey — **19** **1980 Ottawa International Animation Festival :** Gathering of the Clan

24 **Bookshelf** by George L. George
25 **Book Review**
Self-Portrait : Essays on the Canadian and Quebec Cinemas, reviewed by Thomas Waugh

26 **Equipment News**

Film Reviews

28 John Trent's **Middle Age Crazy** by Anna Carlsdottir
29 Claude Fournier's **Les chiens chauds (Hot Dogs)** by Gary Evans
30 George Mendeluk's **The Kidnapping of the President** by Chris Lowry
23 George Mihalka's **Pinball Summer** by Gary Evans
34 John Huston's **Phobia** by John G. Harkness
35 John Guillermin's **Mr. Patman** by John G. Harkness
36 Robin Spry's **Suzanne** by Marc Gervais
38 Michael Grant's **Head On** by Gerry Flahive
40 **CFMDC Short Film Selection** by Chris Lowry

FOR SMART PRODUCERS ONLY
Screen Data Systems
presents
an intelligent approach to the business of making movies, to save you time, money, and hassle with better production management and financial control.

SDS

The SDS Automated Production Accounting Package can give you complete cost reporting, payroll, audit trail, and accounting facilities, right in your production office, right at your fingertips.

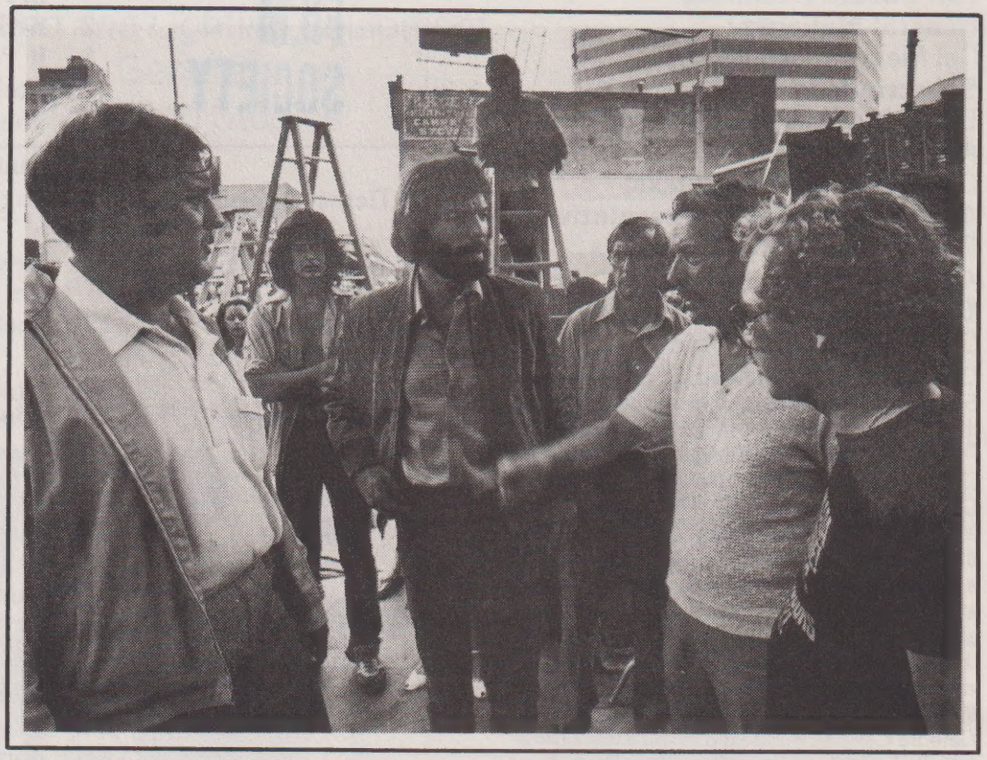
SDS

For a demonstration of this new weapon against waste, call
Tim Hurson (416) 964-0008

IN PROGRESS...

Bells

p.c. Coco Film Production 1 Inc. **exec. p.** Stanley Colbert **p.** Robert Cooper **co-p.** Brian Walker **assoc. p.** Michael Hadley **d.** Michael Anderson **p. man.** Phil McPhedran **v.p. of finance** Greg Sneyd **p. acc.** Heather McIntosh, Lyn Lucibello (asst.) **loc. man.** Lee Knippelberg, Marc Dassas (asst.) **p. sec.** Suzanne Lore **a.d.** Steve Wright, Libby Bowden (2nd), Don Baldassarri (3rd) **p.a.** Roman Buchok, Michael Curran, Simon Clery **cont.** Penny Hynam **d.o.p.** Reginald Morris **cam.op.** Jimmy Turrell, Peter Luxford **asst. cam.** Gordon Langevin (1st), Wendy Walgate (2nd) **stills** Shin Sugino **cable puller** Andy Langfuin **sd.mix.** Peter Shewchuk **boom** Herb Heritage **p. des.** Seamus Flannery **art d.** Rose Marie McSherry (asst.), Roberta King (trainee) **draftsman** Roderick Hilliec **set dec.** Joyce Ligget, Don McQueen (asst.) **prop. mas.** Mark Freeborn, Paul Harding (asst.) **ward. des.** Lynne MacKay, Warehouse **ward. mist.** Nadia Ongaro **ward. asst.** Gail Filman **make-up** Maureen Sweeney (superv.), Carol Davidson (asst.) **hair** Paul LeBlanc (stylist), Malcolm Tanner (asst.) **ed.** Martin Pepler, Penny Hozy (asst.) **gaf.** Chris Holmes **best boy (elec. dept.)** Tony Eldridge **elec.** Sam Hughes, John Spurrel, Herb Reische **key grip** Ron Gillham **best boy (grip dept.)** Glen Goodchild **grip** Wayne Goodchild, John Davidson **spec. efx.** Bill Myatt, Henry Piersig, Kenneth Estes **construc. superv.** Jim Byrne **painter** Jimmy Williams **stunt co-ord.** Bob Hannah **transp. co-ord.** Pat Brennan **captain** Nick Sweetman **craftservice** Brad Blackwood **casting** Walker-Bowen **extra casting** Film Extra Services, Peter Lavender **l.p.** Richard Chamberlain, John Houseman, Sara Botsford, Robin Gammell, Gary Reineke **unit pub.** Prudence Emery



Director Michael Anderson (2nd from right) gesturing instructions to actors Richard Chamberlain (centre) and Jefferson Mappin (far left) on location with **Bells.**

Richard Chamberlain, on the set of **Bells** is enthusiastic about his role as the ex-'60s radical, and small-town-prof-turned-investigator of a mysterious murder — the victim is killed by a signal transmitted by telephone, which then melts the receiver in the victim's hand. Different.

"What a pleasure working with this fabulous crew, director, producer and script," says Chamberlain who, at first glance, appears to be a dashing assistant director — so lightly does he banter with the crew — rather than the serious actor he has proven himself to be in **The Music Lovers, Petulia, The Three Musketeers.**

The idyllic setting of Valley Halla, an impressive stone mansion (circa 1920), on the site of the original Toronto Zoo, is many technological revolutions away from the exotic locale of Chamberlain's last project, **Shogun**. After six and a half months in Japan this story must seem like a piece of cake although he protests that nothing has ever been easy for him, specializing, as he does, in complex, challenging roles.

The TV response to **Shogun** should set up the audience nicely for **Bells**' projected spring release. Already the timing appears to have cast a magic spell of good will; a dream production, a well-knit crew, knowledgeable producers and an able, respected director. No shouts, no pouts, no hisses. An MGM production.

Director Michael Anderson (**Around The World In Eighty Days, Logan's Run, The Martian Chronicles**), recently wed to a Vancouverite and now a landed immigrant, promises an exciting commercial thriller from an "excellent screenplay" by Canadian John Kent Harrison.

The outline itself was picked out by executive producer Stan Colbert (**Riel, Sidestreet, Crossbar**), and producer Robert Cooper (**State Of Shock, Running, Middle Age Crazy**), from a trash/treasure trove of properties orphaned by a corporate squabble at First Artists — a sort of Hollywood rummage sale.

Colbert/Cooper grabbed the outline and farmed it out to Harrison (**Coming Out Alive** and Oscar nominee for **Bravery In The Field**), while Cooper signed ex-David-Lean-assistant Michael Anderson, by now a famous director with credits dating back to 1949. Luckily, they stole a sneak preview of **Shogun**. Impressed with Chamberlain, and finding him available, they began to visualize a movie.

On the set of **Bells**, Anderson demonstrates a sure touch of craft: certainly his confident authority has endeared him to first line d.o.p. Reg Morris (**Tribute, Middle Age Crazy,**

Murder By Decree), who, like all crew members, appreciates a solid director who does not change his mind part way through the set-up! "... editing in the camera," says Reg, "... not six angles."

With his "healthy" $5,000,000 budget co-producer Brian Walker (**Crossbar**), admits that everything is going according to plan. A producer who believes in the value of careful preproduction, he has crewed many films since starting out on props with the CBC, and clearly knows how bad tempers and lack of producer foresight can lead to inefficiency and low morale. He has nothing but praise for the director, stars, script and crew. In fact, the production has progressed so smoothly that at mid-shoot of the eight-week schedule of nine hours, five days a week, they are ahead by almost one full day. Everyone seems accustomed to this steady rhythm of working it out cinematically, shot by shot, without the electric tension of fear that grips some productions.

And how boring for the local journalists who cannot complain about American carpetbaggers, since no attempt has been made to "disguise" Toronto as New Orleans, New York or Chicago. Nope, it's just another large North American city with a weird murderer.

The story itself lies somewhere between **The Conversation, Lipstick** and **The China Syndrome**. The producers are hoping that **Bells** will do for the telephone what **Psycho** did for the shower curtain. However reluctantly, Bell Canada is co-operating; having to admit that "yes" it may be possible to kill with VHF and a power surge, but also "no," since the electronics are on the experimental level of, say, the Coppola Cannes winner. But does it really matter? As Hitchcock said, "It's only a movie."

Bells is designed to be solid, entertaining trickery; polished up by professionals to satisfy the theatre-goers' curiosity for the latest, exotic death-threat.

John Houseman plays Richard's ex-mentor, who is somehow implicated until he is killed by the real villain, canuck Robin Gammell. Sara Botsford (Richard's love in this pic), Barry Morse and Gary Reineke head a supporting cast of 40 speaking roles with 2,000 extras in the background.

Another feature of the scenario is the special effects team, headed by Hollywoodian Bill Myatt (**1941, Towering Inferno**), which makes the telephone melt, the bodies shake and shatter, the tear ducts enlarge and pop with the graphic immediacy of **Alien**. In fact, Anderson claims something new in effects: they are not astronomical, but anatomical; more intimate, more personal. The first minute promises to be a tour de force shocker according to the tests.

Richard Chamberlain plays a concerned citizen in real life as well, supporting the Toronto Island residents and cheering these fair pavements on his first border crossing. One Canadian could not resist asking him the famous riddle; "What is the difference between a Canadian and an American?" Yes! He *did* agree that there was a difference; but... no, he just could not put his finger on it... One diagnosis that was beyond the former Dr. Kildare.

This odd similarity/difference between the two cultures may work in our favour, by lending a natural air of irony to our films — since we act as a huge mirror, we can offer a slightly distorted view of American society. We could sell a lot of popcorn just on the curiosity value. But surely, with this production, and others of this calibre, we are finally gaining the confidence which will enable us to find our rightful place in the film production centres of the world. Stay tuned.

Fritz Mann

If You Could See What I Hear

p.c. Cypress Grove Films Ltd. (1980) **exec. p.** Dale Falconer **p./d.** Eric Till **co-p./sc.** Stuart Gillard **creative consult.** Gene Corman **d.o.p.** Harry Makin **art d.** Gavin Mitchell **mus. co-ord.** Eric Robertson **sd. man.** Rod Haykin **p. man.** Joyce Kozy-King **a.d.** David Shepherd (1st), Richard Flower (2nd) **loc. man.** Otta Hanus **cont. superv.** Lili Fournier **p. account.** Ann Fitzgerald **p. sec.** Debbie Zwicker **prop. mas.** John Fisher **set dec.** Earle Fiset **spec. efx.** Martin Malivoire **ward.** Patti Unger **make-up** Ken Brooke **hair** David Beecroft **gaf.** Ray Boyle **key grip** Steve Sheridan **film ed.** Eric Wrate **sd. ed.** Jim Hopkins **2nd unit d.** Rob Malenfant **2nd unit cam.** Bert Dunk **stills** Bill Langstroth, Marni Grossman **unit pub.** G.R.O. - Glenda Roy **pub.** Guttman & Pam USA **l.p.** Mark Singer, R.H. Thomson, Sarah Torgov, Shari Belafonte Harper, Douglas Campbell, Helen Burns, Harvey Atkin, Barbara Gordon, Sharon Lewis, Lynda Mason Greene, Tony Van Bridge, Jack Creley, Neil Dainard, Michael Tate, David Gardner, Noni Griffin, Adrienne Pocock, Hugh Webster **unit pub.** G.R.O. - Glenda Roy **pub.** Guttman & Pam USA.

The blind singer leaves the stage, and crosses the dance floor to sit with a bunch of rowdy vacationers who are looking for one more one-night-stand.

He's witty, it's a warm summer evening, and the mood's just right, but the pretty blonde just doesn't react the way the others do. Slowly, he realizes that he's not going to score the way he usually does, as she zaps him with some comebacks that leave him, for once, speechless.

He's fascinated, and determines that here, at last, is a true challenge.

"O.K., one more run through, then we'll break for lunch." Director Eric Till moves from where he's been crouching by the stage, and goes over to confer with D.O.P. Harry Makin. A few production assistants move a Cape Cod Dory to where we've been standing.

We walk outside, not into the New England night, but into lunchtime Yonge St. in Toronto. Over coffee, Stuart Gillard, writer and co-producer, confides that even though the shooting is a week

Film Arts
Film Arts

TORONTO
FILM
SOCIETY

461 Church Street · Toronto ·
Ontario · Canada

Telephones
962-0181
962-0182

Tom Sullivan's (Mark Singer) bachelor life includes a heartbreaking romance with Heather (Shari Belafonte Harper), a summer passion with the waitress Helga (Sharon Lewis), and finally, true love with Patty (Sarah Torgov).

behind schedule, he is not unduly worried. Neither, apparently, is Till, whose infectious laugh can be heard constantly on set, where the atmosphere is anything but tense.

If You Could See What I Hear is the story of what Gillard considered to be the two most crucial years in the life of his friend, Tom Sullivan. The scene at the Rum Runner, a Cape Cod bar/restaurant, takes place in the summer between Sullivan's junior and senior years at Harvard. The sassy blonde who shuts him up is Patty (the original Patty is now married to Sullivan), played in the film by Sarah Torgov (**Drying Up The Streets, Meatballs**). "Four of us, independently, came to the conclusion that Sarah was the only one for the part,"says Gillard. "She has the same untouchable quality, the same intriguing warmth."

At this, the chronological mid-point of the film, Sullivan, played by Marc Singer, is busy making money during the vacation singing with his band, and proving to himself that if there are more hearts to be broken, *he*'s going to be the breaker, not the breakee. This resolution is the result of his recently ended affair with Heather, the black Radcliffe girl he had lived with for several months before he knew she was black. Shari Belafonte Harper, the bubbly beautiful daughter of the calypso crooner, plays Heather, whose inability to make a commitment results in Sullivan's broken heart.

Singer's own heart is in this role : he's had to learn how to golf, wrestle, skydive and row, not to mention move and act as a blind man. "He's developed a kind of self-hypnosis for the part," says Gillard. "He's found a way to get his eyes out of focus so that he looks at you in a non-seeing fashion. It's hard to do, and it's been causing a few headaches." It looks real enough, however, that strangers accept him as blind when he trips over them while practicing for the role.

The *real* Sullivan, composer, singer, author, actor and athlete, thinks Singer is perfect to play him. There is a strong physical resemblance. He also has nothing but praise for R.H. Thomson in the part of Sly, his best friend through endless campus pranks. Sullivan, in town during the Festival of Festivals for a press brunch to promote the film, spoke about the screen Sullivan, as he actually spoke about himself in the third person : "Blindness is only a part of who Tom Sullivan is. It's an inconvenience, not a handicap. You just have to find another way to do things."

That's not just lip service ; it appears to be an attitude that he and Gillard share in common. When they met, and Gillard asked about the film rights to Tom's book of the same name, he was told that the script was already being written. Three years, and eight versions later, the rights reverted to Sullivan, and Gillard started writing the script. He, too, found another way to do it. Instead of trying to cover the whole of Sullivan's life, he confined himself, with the benefit of personal knowledge of his subject, to the two most critical and formative years.

Perhaps the most remarkable part of the story is the feeling that pervades the set, and the attitudes of the people involved ; it is an attitude that stems from Sullivan himself, that as a blind person, no one owes him anything. Indeed, his approach is so positive, and unself-conscious, that everyone forgets that he

is blind. He talks about seeing, and people ask him to come and look at things, which he considers to be as great a compliment as he can be paid — although it is he who makes it possible.

Remarkable too, is the discovery that R.H. Thompson has a natural flair for comedy. Says Gillard, "Sly's a key character, very funny. Everyone knows what a fine, serious actor R.H. is, but very few serious actors can be funny. Eric had worked with him on **American Christmas Carol**, and just felt that he could do it."

Funded through Newhouse, the Winnipeg investment corporation, the film is co-exec-produced by Gene Corman (**F.I.S.T.** and 50 other major movies over the last twenty years) and Dale Falconer, one of the moves behind TOFCO, independent distribution consortium in the U.S.A.

After two weeks exterior shooting in Nova Scotia, the film continues for another five in Toronto.

Martin Harbury

The Fright

p.c. Filmplan International Inc. (1980) **exec. p.** Pierre David, Victor Solnicki **assist. to exec. p.** Denise Ponton, Elaine Roy **p.** Claude Héroux **sec. to p.** Monique Legaré **script co-ord.** Denise DiNovi **recept.** Mei Chan, Christine Moore **comptroller** Serge Major, Gilles Léonard (asst.) **legal counsel** Sander Gibson **d.** Jean-Claude Lord **script** Brian Taggert **p. man.** Gwen Iveson, Janet Cuddy (asst.) **p. sec.** Denyse Forget **unit man.** Michel Wachniuc **a.d.** Julian Marks (1st), Blair Roth (2nd), David Bailey (3rd) **cont.** France Boudreau **p.a.** Jerry Potashnick (1st), Louis Gascon (2nd), Peter Serapiglia (3rd) **craftservice** Michael Egyes **p. account.** Yvette Duguet **books** Joanne Gosselin, Diane Williamson, Linda Duguet **art. d.** Michel Proulx, Dominique L'Abbé (asst.), Sylvie Dagenais (trainee) **art dept. admin.** Maurice Tremblay **draftsperson** Renée Tardif **set dress.** François Seguin, Jean Gauthier (asst.), Simon Lahaye (temp. asst.) **construc. man.** Claude Simard **head props** Jean-Baptiste Tard **prop. buyer** Frances Calder **propsman** Daniel Huysmans **bird handler** Marc Conway **dog handler** Gilles Chartier **cost. design.** Delphine White, Ginette Magny-Aird (asst.) **head dresser** Suzanne Canuel, Mario D'Avignon (asst.) **seamstress/cutter** Momelle LeBlanc (temp.) **daily help** Sylvie Bellemare **make-up** Inge Klaudi, Kathryn Casault (asst.) **efx. make-up** Stephan Dupuis, Michele Burke (asst.) **hair** Constant Natale **hair (Miss Grant's)** Pierre David **d.o.p./cam. op.** René Verzier **1st asst./focus** Denis Gingras **2nd asst./clapper/loader** Jean-Jacques Gervais **cam. dept. trainee** Barbara Samuels **stills** Pierre Dury **Steadicam** Louis De Ernsted **loc. mixer** Don Cohen **boom op.** Gabor Vadnay **gaf.** Don Caulfield **best boy** Richer Francoeur **elec.** Marc Charlebois **key grip** Jacob Rolling **asst. key grip/dolly** Norman Guy **grip** Michel St-Pierre **transport man.** Charles Toupin **talent driver (grant)** Richard Marsan **t.d. (Shatner)** Réal Baril **t.d. (Purl)** Jean-Claude Cloutier **drivers** Glen Light, Michel Martin, Michel Sarao, Maurice Dubois, Vincente Di Clemente, Bernard Kirschner **stunt co-ord.** Jim Arnett **spec. efx.** Gary Zeller (superv.), Don Berry (co-ord.), Renée Rousseau (assist.), Yves Dubrieul (tech.), François Beauregard (tech.) **casting** (T.O.) Walker-Bowan, (Mtl.) Ginette D'Amico, Flo Gallant (assist.), Rosina Bucci (assist.) **l.p.** Lee Grant, Linda Purl, William Shatner, Michael Ironside, Lenore Zann, Helen Hugues, Sylvia Lennick, Mary Rathbone, Harvey Atkin, Lenn Watt, Kirsten Bishopric, Tali Fisher, Elizabeth Mylle, Dabra Kirschenbaum, Jérôme Tibergien, Dustin Waln, Maureen MacRae, Danny Silverman, Dorothy Barker, France March, Danièle Schneider, Victor Knight, Angela Gallagher, Dora Dainton, Sheena Lardin.

«**The Fright**», Quebec filmmaker Jean-Claude Lord's sixth feature is being shot entirely in Montreal. The interior and exterior sequences require a 40-day shooting schedule, and, into their fourth week, crew and cast are confident the film will be finished on schedule.

American screenwriter, Brian Taggert, is available on the set for any consultation necessary. Two other Americans are also members of the cast: Lee Grant, in the starring role of Deborah Ballin, television broadcaster (with Montreal-born William Shatner as her friend and studio news director, Gary Ball); and Linda Purl, a relative newcomer on the Hollywood scene, who plays Sheila Monroe, a caring nurse who refuses to let herself become calloused. The conflict in the movie revolves around the character of Colt Hawker, a deranged man who has a fixation about the Ballin TV personality and wants to kill her. Portrayed by Michael Ironside, Colt focuses his attention on the woman who is a mother figure to him — an embarrassment which simultaneously pains and terrifies him.

Ironside says the film reminds him of a quote by Paul Schroeder, which contrasts the classical methods of suicide in Eastern and Western society. In the former, they isolate themselves, discreetly pulling down the blinds and quietly doing away with themselves; in the latter, it's a matter of going out publicly, with a loud bang. "The most

Awaiting **The Fright**? Here Lee Grant with William Shatner.

difficult part for me is making Colt believable, giving him the proper organic roots — a background to come from. But he's an interesting analysis, as there's a sensuality, a tactileness, about him. I want the audience not to sympathize with him, but to be able to empathize with his character."

Originally budgeted at $4.8 million, **The Fright** is a Filmplan International production whose budget has currently shot up to $5.5 million ; the result of a production decision to boost the quality of the feature. No international or television pre-release distribution deals have been made by the producers, who claim this is not a part of their policy. The feature is slated for release in October, 1981, and while some interim financing was generated by the Canadian Film Development Corporation, $3 million came from Corporation Civitas Ltée (of which Filmplan is a subsidiary). The film is part of a public offering currently being circulated by Filmplan International.

An imposing eight-inch silver switchblade is one major prop in the film, while a second, more harmless, is the TV personality's pet — a four-year-old macaw. This colourful, South American, long-tailed parrot was born and bred in captivity in Florida, until he was bought by Filmplan. In the film he will fly across a room to perch on someone's shoulder. Although the script does not require him to talk, his handler, Torontonian Marc Conway, says that he has taught the bird to say, "Don't kill that man," among a few other choice lines. Whether or not the director choses to exploit the parrot's verbal talents remains to be seen.

One of the more interesting locations is the tenth floor of an abandoned warehouse on St. Lawrence Street. Affording a fine view of the city of Montreal (including spectacular sunsets and rising moons), its isolation makes it an ideal temporary studio. Unit manager Michel Wachniuc was responsible for the discovery. In return for use of the premises, production carpenters have built up the previously uncompleted floor to include Armstrong ceilings, floors, walls and doors. Fortunately for the building's owner, this has already led to a prospective new tenant.

In the film, most of the tenth floor will appear as the hallways and wards of — as the sign at the elevator states — the County General Hospital, in small-town Massachusetts. However, Colt Hawker's two-and-a-half room apartment is also set on the premises. The crew has had to contend with the only other tenant of the building by asking his plumbers to cease drilling while one of the main scenes was being shot. One of the film's several locations has included a fascinating one-day shoot at Montreal's Institute of Cardiology where bona fide surgeons were "shot" at work in their operating room. Plans for other interesting locations are in the works.

One cast member described the story as being halfway between **Wait Until Dark** and **Taxi Driver**, emphasizing that the actors are striving for the same level of quality. Several crew members felt that they were working with an excellent film based on a healthy script. Moreover, most of the seventy-plus workers are earnestly going about their duties despite a schedule that frequently results in their finishing work at three and four a.m.

Energy and dedication aside, Jean-Claude Lord's first English feature may, or may not, prove to be a fresh variation on the psychodrama theme. Mere entertainment, or entertainment with depth ? In time, its artistic quality and box office receipts will tell the tale.

Anna Fudakowska

TICKET TO HEAVEN
Laboratory services by
Medallion Film Laboratories Limited
559 ROGERS RD., TORONTO, M6M 1B4 • (416) 653-6176

the world film festival of montreal

a time of transition

by kevin tierney

photo: Lois Siegel

Pleased as punch, Louise Carré clasps her award for the Best Canadian Film Out of Competition at the World Film Festival

Montreal's World Film Festival aspires to be a competitive arena and a full-fledged marketplace for both national and international films. As such, the problems it faces are the natural by-product of its ambitious character.

Now that this year's version of the World Film Festival of Montreal is over, one would think that its mentor and driving force, Serge Losique, could relax. But that just isn't his style: before announcing the winners of this year's competition, he made another announcement — the fifth World Film Festival will be held next year from August 22 to September 1, and will pay homage to German Cinema.

Despite this announcement, it is doubtful that Losique's version of the festival will continue unchallenged next year. Before lending its support this year, the Quebec government requested that the 1980 festival be transitional — though in what way was never made clear. It remains a festival that has no center, no vital core. Nevertheless, optimists are quick to point to its age, and defend its potential: the world's only existential film festival — it exists, while still trying to discover its essence.

Pessimists, however, claim that without a solid identity this Montreal event will only be considered a good place to visit because, as one Italian producer so eloquently phrased a stupid, but nonetheless cogent comment, "You're only 45 minutes from New York."

This year's festival was leaner than its predecessors: it lacked the glitter, the stars, and some would say, the quality. There was no single runaway success like last year's **The Tin Drum**, but the added screenings of three popular films did indicate that film is alive in Montreal.

In effect, the real winners of the festival were the filmgoers themselves — whose support of the films has possibly assured the festival's survival. Their enthusiasm harked back to a time when Montreal was considered a fine town in which to see movies. Sadly, this is no longer the case. If it takes this festival to rekindle that spirit, and enable those truly interested in cinema to see what the rest of the world is doing, then let's hope it lives. All sorts of other special interest groups, from jocks to flower lovers, have their activities subsidized by various governments, so why shouldn't movie fans?

Max Fischer's **The Lucky Star** — Canada's only entry in the feature film competition — opened the festival, and despite having received schizophrenic reviews, found its audience. **Mon oncle d'Amérique**, directed by the dean of French directors, Alain Resnais, proved through its popularity that criticism from Cannes is seen here as canned criticism. **Palermo or Wolfsburg**, a sprawling and ambitious film of the German New Wave, never once, in all of its 175 minutes, tries to console the viewer. Still, the audiences went, indicating clearly that they were in search of cinematic excellence.

In addition to the screenings, audiences were also involved in two different symposia. The first, "The Influence of the Film Critic on Today's Cinema," chaired by Charles Champlin for the *Los Angeles Times*, was remarkable for two reasons: not a single Canadian critic was present on the dias, and neither were any filmmakers. As a result, the guest critics and producers argued about the difference between cinema and movies, and whether or not critics should, or do, keep ticket buyers away from, or running to the theatres — virtually ignoring the larger question of whether or not critics actually influence the direction and form of cinema.

photo Lois Siegel

A moment of good cheer for festival president Serge Losique and two of the Chinese buyers

The second symposium on "State Aid to the Development of National Cinema" was notable for different reasons. Representatives from Australia, Sweden, France, Germany and Canada addressed themselves to the topic by either reading to the assembled listeners, or offering more information than anyone would want to know, without shedding any new light on the complicated nature of support, tax shelters and capital cost allowances. Essentially, it all ended where it had begun — with the realization that, without state assistance, we can only look forward to the further encroachment of American culture.

One common theme which was not dealt with, but which managed to rear its ugly head in both of these discussions, was the subject of distribution — and the tone was ominous. Kathleen Caroll of the *New York Daily News* spoke with pride of how the New York critics had defied the distributors and saved **The Great Santini** from an early death by lending their pens of praise to a film that deserved attention. However, on the same panel sat Mme Yvette Mallet, the person responsible for Gaumont's American operation. She sadly informed her listeners that because of negative criticism, two Gaumont films which had been scheduled as part of the Homage to Gaumont — Maurice Pialat's **Loulou** and Fellini's **City of Women** — would not be shown.

The Homage to Hitchcock had a better reception and was, at one point, being touted by rumor-mongers as the real hit of the festival.

Quietly plodding along was the film market, where the biggest question seemed to be what the three-man delegation from the China Film Corporation would buy to take back with them. As it turned out, they enjoyed many films, bought none, but confirmed that they had made "good contacts" and would be back next year. Participants seemed divided as to how much action the market had generated: certainly nobody was wearing that ear-to-ear grin a big sale usually brings with it. Despite the market's low profile, most sellers made ends meet, and then some. This year's sales' volume was higher than that of any previous year.

Kevin Tierney is a free-lance writer in Montreal who teaches film and writing at John Abbott College.

The festival started out with 23 feature films in competition for Le Grand Prix des Amériques, but ended up with 22, following the unexplained withdrawal of France's **La petite sirène**. (Rumour had it being withdrawn here so that it could be entered at the Venice Festival — a rumour with decidedly bad implications for the prestige of this festival.) In a repeat of this year's Cannes Festival, the jury came up with a tie : **Fontamara**, a film which was shot simultaneously for two media — a four-hour version for television and a two-hour film version ; and **The Stunt Man**, directed by Richard Rush, an American film that, like the other U.S. films entered in competition (**Health** and **The Great Santini**) has experienced enormous difficulties in finding distribution.

Best Actor was Robert Duvall for his bravado performance as **The Great Santini** ; Best Actress went to Ana Torrent, a young Spanish actress, who was very good in **El Nido**. The jury handed out two other prizes for : **A Distant Cry From Spring**, from Japan, directed by Yoji Yamada ; and **The Wild Hunting of King Stakh**, from Russia, directed by Valérie Roubintchik. **Sunday Daughters**, from Hungary, directed by Janos Rozsa, received a special mention and also won the Ecumenical Prize.

In the Short Film category, the Grand Prize of Montreal was awarded to **La découverte**, directed by Arthur Joffe of France, while the Jury Prize went to **Score**, directed by Arthur Everard of New Zealand.

The critics voted their award for the Best Canadian Film out of Competition to the Québécois film **Ça peut pas être l'hiver, on n'a même pas eu d'été**, directed by Louise Carré ; and the announcement at the closing ceremony was greeted by shouts of approval.

In contrast, the film chosen to close the festival, **The Apple**, directed by Menahem Golem, was hardly given the same reception: when not being booed, it was being hooted — ending this year's festival on a somewhat sour note.

■

From Our Mailbag

The following open letter was sent to the World Film Festival of Montreal.

Your selection of the film **The Apple** as the screening to close your 1980 Festival with seems completely incredible to me. How could any one with any sense of taste, of integrity or respect of the arts deliberately choose to screen a work that is so outrageously bad that one cannot only take it seriously enough to critique? It constituted not only a grave and irredeemable insult to the name of your festival, but it was also a blatant insult to the kind of audience you must have anticipated would attend such an event. It was this particular screening which more than any other reflected the cinematic notions of the festival committee. The effect is anything but complimentary ; in fact, it is my express hope that the reaction to this kind of vulgar and insensitive management is sufficient to make this the final year for your film festival.

Dwight W.A. Smith

toronto's festival of festivals

all that glitters . . .

by gary lamphier

The Festival of Festivals has hit its stride. Strong local support, a solid organizational base, a balanced budget and a secure identity helped to guarantee the success of this year's extravaganza.

photo: John Williamson

Smiles all around for **Divine Madness** star Bette Midler, her agent (right) and Alan Ladd Jr. at the festival

By almost any standard, the 1980 version of Toronto's Festival of Festivals must be considered a success.

Attendance was up by 25,000 over last year's record 105,000, box office tallies reached a heady $160,000 (50 percent more than '79), attendance, at least on paper, at the expanded, slickly run Trade Forum was on par with last year's successful inaugural event. The quality of the galas and additional premieres was thoroughly respectable, and the annual parade of famous faces continued unabated. In all, the festival attracted the kind of media coverage reserved for the Stanley Cup playoffs.

No longer struggling for an identity, nor preoccupied with those tiresome verbal wars with Serge Losique, the festival has become an annual focal point for the Canadian feature film industry and thousands of Toronto movie addicts alike.

Gary Lamphier, former **CinéMag** *reporter, is currently a free-lance journalist and scriptwriter living in Toronto.*

As with any event of like proportions, the festival is many things to many people. To serious students of the cinema, the 1980 model revolved around an exhaustive look at the work of Jean-Luc Godard ; to neo-punkers it was Sid Vicious and company in the New Music series ; to the star-gazing Toronto public, it was the divinely charismatic Bette Midler, with a dash of James Coburn, Ellen Burstyn and Sally Kellerman for added colour ; to the Canadian Filmmaking Establishment it was a five-day post-mortem examination of last year's $170 million house party ; to boxing fans, it was Bill Marshall and Mordecai Richler going toe to toe ; and to all ye who refuse to lose faith in the Canadian film industry, it was the sublime satisfaction of **Mr. Patman, Les bons débarras** and **L'homme à tout faire**.

Essentially, though, the festival has two major components : the unadulterated celebration of cinema that is the public entity ; and the political in-fighting, lobbying, handshaking and occasional outpouring of anguish that constitutes the Trade Forum, a five-day, $275-a-head gathering of industry heavyweights. The two events, of course, serve radically different functions and audiences, and this year achieved rather different levels of success.

The 157-film program compiled for the 1980 festival was quite strong on balance, though it lacked some of the excitement generated by last year's entries. There was no equivalent to the **Best Boy** phenomenon that swept the '79 event, for instance, and the timely appraisals of New German cinema and the horror genre programmed a year ago failed to find equally electric encores.

Nevertheless, 1980 had its gems : the enduring popularity of David Overby's Critic's Choice series (and the fine Dutch films that formed part of it) ; John Katz's politically timely Less is More series, which brought us two of the best of last year's crop of Canadian productions — Micheline Lanctôt's **L'homme à tout faire** and Francis Mankiewicz's **Les bons débarras** ; and a host of well-received galas : Bill Marshall's **Mr. Patman**, Universal's **Resurrection**, Polish director Andrzej Wajda's **The Conductor**, Nicolas Roeg's **Bad Timing** (winner of the Labatt's Most Popular Film Award), and the super-charged energy of Bette Midler in **Divine Madness**, an ideal closing gala if ever there was one.

On the down side, disappointment must be registered for two other Canadian entries, Robin Spry's **Suzanne** and Michael Grant's **Head On** (though both had merits : Jennifer Dale's performance in the former and Grant's promising direction in the latter).

In addition, the eight-film Contemporary French Cinema series so disappointed festival director Wayne Clarkson that he plans to scrap subsequent national cinema programs.

And due to logistical problems, a print of **Jaguar**, the much-praised film by Philippine director Lino Brocka, could not be obtained for a scheduled festival screening.

Aside from the above, the only other major problem, ironically, was due to the festival's embarrassment of riches : there were too many films screening simultaneously at too many theatres to allow passholders — the festival's bread and butter — to see them all. Consequently, this year's highly-successful program of repeat screenings at the Revue Cinema leads Clarkson to believe that a reduced overall program next year (with increased repeats) is the answer.

While the festival struggled to find an adequate form for its cinematic content, the second annual Trade Forum suffered from the same problem in reverse. The enduring impression one retains from this year's 10-seminar installment is that, contrary to the film program, form far outshone content.

To be sure, the trade sessions were slickly and efficiently staged, and by all accounts well-run. Topics were carefully chosen and panels were reasonably balanced. Official attendance, though reportedly hurt by the U.S. Screen Actors Guild (SAG) strike, was roughly the same as last year. And most of the key players were there.

Despite all of that, very little of real value transpired. The same people repeated the same tired things, assuming the same rigid positions and dredging up issues that are by now clichés of the Canadian experience : nationalism vs. internationalism, culture vs. commerce, art vs. the profit motive, star power vs. home-grown talent ; all of it paraded before the audience like so much cattle at an auction, garbed in rhetoric that is by now painfully familiar. We'd heard it all before.

To assess what did — or didn't — happen at the 1980 Trade Forum, it is perhaps necessary to establish a context. As everyone in the industry has by now been told, 1980 is the Year of the Shakedown.

SPECIAL SALE
ON NEW 16/35 INTERCINE
FOR LIMITED TIME
20% OFF
SALE PRICE $24,500
DUTY FREE, FEDERAL SALES TAX FREE

CALL ALEX L. CLARK LTD.

TORONTO	**416-255-8594** **C. Patterson** **C. Adkins** **M. Fitzgerald** **G. Ramsdale**
MONTREAL	**514-878-4625** **A.D. Russell** **P. Pelletier**
OTTAWA	**613-829-9802** **E. Tomlinson**
CALGARY	**403-282-7050** **D. Oram**

The stratospheric spiritual heights reached at last year's Forum — a short 12 months ago, though it seems an epoch — have given way to internal bickering, disappointment, loss of investor confidence and a sobering atmosphere of re-evaluation. The industry has witnessed the departure of Canadian Film Development Corporation (CFDC) chief Michael McCabe, rumblings of policy shifts with the crowning of his successor, André Lamy, and promised belt-tightening at both the Secretary of State and the provincial Securities Commissions.

But the epicenter of this prolonged earthquake undoubtedly occurred at the Cannes Film Festival in May, when Canada's critics dumped on many of the films produced during last year's explosion. Put differently, the pie received in last year's sky was unceremoniously shoved in the industry's face.

Perhaps it was, as some say, an overreaction to the excessive expectations nurtured by last year's hype. Perhaps it was unfair generalization based on a few bad films. Or perhaps, as the critics argue, Canada's films at Cannes were just plain stinko.

Regardless of the answer, it was clear at the beginning of Trade Forum '80 that industry spokesmen were still smarting from the scathing attacks in the Canadian press. "Last year we were talking about boom," recalled CFDC chairman Michel Vennat at an opening luncheon. "This year, if one reads the Toronto press at least, we're talking of gloom."

alpha cine service

Western Canada's Full Service Laboratory and Sound Studios

35MM — 16MM

ALPHA CINE SERVICE

916 DAVIE STREET, VANCOUVER, B.C.

PHONE: (604) 688-7757

TELEX 04-507757

Since many of the panelists (and audience members, for that matter) played central roles in the production frenzy that overtook the industry in '79, it shouldn't have been too surprising that some panel discussions were simply used as springboards for attack against The Enemy. The old *Us vs. Them* shuffle.

The press got theirs, the "fascistic cultural imperialists" at the Council of Canadian Filmmakers (CCFM) got theirs, the monopolistic exhibition chains and their U.S.-based accomplices drew heavy fire, the CFDC board of directors was given a blast, and a few subversives continued to hound the dealmakers — the producers themselves.

That isn't to say that constructive exchanges didn't take place. Indeed, some incisive probing and realistic proposals were aired: witness producer Robert Lantos's push for "equalization measures" to aid Canada's beleaguered independent distributors; casting agent Lynn Kinney and producer Stanley Colbert's call for increased CCA incentives for the low-budget filmmaker; producer Stephen Roth's suggestion to encourage production during the traditionally-slow first quarter by altering the CCA, and financier/sales rep David Roffey's proposal that residency be a factor in determining whether or not a performer qualifies as Canadian under the point system.

But these were exceptions. Too often, key points seemed simply to vaporize and disappear without a trace. (Unless, of course, they materialized on the notebooks of Ian McLaren and company from the Secretary of State's office.)

As Clarkson puts it, the Trade Forum is meant to annually "evaluate, assess and project conditions in the Canadian film industry." And as one Forum organizer adds, "The purpose of the Trade Forum isn't necessarily to find new things all the time, but to discuss what's been going on."

As a reflection of "what's been going on," then, the name-calling, sectoral rivalries and dogmatic bickering that took place at this year's Forum was dead on.

While official figures put attendance at between 375 and 425, seldom more than one-third that number attended the sessions. In fact, a spokesman says only about 100 people purchased Forum passes, with another 30 or so buying daily passes. That means the bulk of the official attendance was comprised of press people and other festival guests.

At a cost of about $200,000, most of it paid by various government bodies, the Trade Forum seems a rather extravagant way to re-hash old news. Perhaps smaller groups focusing on the pragmatic rather than broadly general issues might serve the interest of the industry more effectively. Witness this year's meeting of provincial and municipal film officers at the Forum.

In the final analysis, though, it's the viability and vitality of the Canadian film industry that will determine the Forum's fate. If Jerry Rappoport, Arnie Huberman, Andy Vajna, Jack Freedman, Bill Marshall, David Perlmutter, Stephen Roth, Jack Gray, and Syd Banks continue to have something in common, presumably they will find the opportunities for exchange afforded them by the Trade Forum useful. ■

tacking into the wind

Among those who offered a global perspective at Trade Forum '80 were Marc Gervais and Robert Verrall. Both keen, long-time observers of national film developments, their Forum presentations, reprinted below, reflect the mood of the industry debate, summer 1980.

an industry assessment

by marc gervais

Assessing the present state of the film industry in Canada is no easy task. For one thing, just about every facet of the business is changing with alarming rapidity. Moreover, in this kind of undertaking, the figures and statistics even of past years are difficult to collate.. Add to that the fact that probably no one here has seen the great majority of the fifty or sixty films produced in 1979, and you get a rough idea of the general lack of definite data.

Most of the participants in Trade Forum '80 are involved in film from the *business* and *industry* point of view. As such, your concerns centre on the raising of money, the setting up of the conditions for creating the right kind of product, and, finally, for the selling of that product. All pretty essential activities, to say the least.

But you will notice that a number of people on the opening panel do not — at least at the professional level — necessarily share those priorities. There are theorists, film reviewers, critics, what-have-you, here as well; and they help fill out the picture. For the industry can never ignore that its product is not like most market products. It creates *cultural* artifacts — people's hearts and minds. So, the artistic dimension (call it what you will) is ever present.

Put it another way. Can you imagine a civilization whose painting, writing, music, architecture, theatre were totally void of cultural or artistic values? Whether we like it or not, movies share the role of the other arts. This mass entertainment medium is not just a commodity to be bought and sold.

A realistic approach to film, then, cannot be reduced to an either/or option; rather, it is rooted in a duality, embracing both the cultural/artistic and the commercial/industrial.

Keeping this rather obvious, but utterly essential consideration in mind, then, what is the state of the film industry in Canada today? To put it baldly: if we are to believe recent reports, we are in a *disaster* area, the films are terrible, nobody is buying them, and the investment is no longer flowing in.

Assessment or indictment? Are we dealing here with objective analysis, or is the wave of negative comment presently inundating the Canadian feature film industry nothing but one more manifestation of the old Canadian self-put-down syndrome, that we have experienced time and again over the years *ad nauseam*?

A group such as this one here at Trade Forum '80 cannot afford to side-step the issue, pretending that there is no basis for the bad reporting. The accusations being made are of a kind, if true, to put the movie business right *out* of business. What, in fact, is our feature film situation? What can be improved through vigorous action motivated by *enlightened* self-interest?

Any approach to the making of films has its own particular pitfalls, its avenues to self-destruction. In the sixties, for example — when feature filmmaking in Canada went through a kind of re-birth — a daring, sociological, personal, artistic-

---

Marc Gervais is a Montreal film critic and an associate professor in the Communication Arts Department at Concordia University. He is the author of ***Pier Paolo Pasolini*** edited by Seghers in Paris.

ally ambitious *auteur* cinema was the way of life, with film directors literally running the whole show. The results, in certain instances, were truly impressive, giving Canada an elitist international reputation. But in terms of box office or mass appeal, that approach did not lead to success.

A dozen years later, just two or three years ago, we hurtled headlong into another era ; that of the film *entrepreneur* working in the wholly new context of a massive, complex industry in the throes of trying to create itself without benefit of a normal gestation period. In many ways — especially at the level of sheer quantity — the results have been prodigious. But the pitfalls are gigantic ones. And they have not always been successfully circumvented — to put it charitably.

So here we are in year III, more or less, of the Great Canadian Feature Film Explosion, with the entrepreneurial option which gave it birth facing very heavy criticism. Where is the film industry today? Well, one way to answer is to pause by each pitfall, gazing sadly at the mangled, aborted creatures lying therein, those pathetic symbols of what is worst in the Canadian feature movie scene.

Model no. 1 : the worst. Our recent history has had too many examples of the quick kill operation, where the important thing is to get *any* film going, no matter how bad, because, thanks to tax benefits, the entrepreneur can raise the money and take a huge cut right off the top.

Even the most naive financial rookie can see how deadly this practice can be for any film industry. For a fledgeling such as ours, it is nothing short of catastrophic. Fortunately, through the setting up of norms, rules, etc., the industry has already taken serious steps to protect itself from this sort of thing.

Model no. 2 : the typical *now* aberration. The entrepreneurs — producers, executive producers, brokers, accountants, lawyers — sincerely wish to make films that will be successful at the box office, and so give their investors a real profit. So far so good. The trouble is, very often, that these entrepreneurs have precious little background in film at *any* level. But they have a naive belief in some sort of magical "Hollywood" success formula. And, deep down, they feel they understand what goes into a popular film much better than the director — whom, in any case, they distrust. So, in a direct reversal from the *auteur* days of the sixties, they move in on the creative side of the process, invading the domains of the directors, script writers, and editors. There are some instances of creation by board room committee, no less with sadly predictable results.

In this kind of creative venture, you need a tame director ; preferably a Hollywood veteran who knows how to make a movie that *looks* as if it were made in the U.S., and who realizes who is paying his salary.

How many movies of recent vintage, silly pastiches that help give Canada the reputation of being a dumping ground for things that Hollywood has turned down, fall into this unhappy category ? A rhetorical question indeed.

The producer role is an immensely challenging and difficult one. No wonder, then, that it probably still is the weakest area in the Canadian feature scene. The conclusion should be obvious : rather than usurp the *director*'s function, the producer should strive mightily to become truly competent in creating the conditions that permit directors, etc., to make good films. Needless to add that that applies to the financiers as well. Perhaps one of the most promising signs of late is the growing number of Canada's most qualified directos who are being given the chance to share in the boom. They, too, however, must learn the rules of the new game, which is anything but a one-man show. Their return in force should help improve the general level of product.

The formula. Let's go back to that famous recipe that so many believe in. Unquestionably, the world seems to have given Hollywood first rights to every popular market. Different countries will each go in their own, particular, national direction ; but when it comes to films of *mass, popular, international* appeal, they seem to leave that to Hollywood. Is it a question of know-how, or what ?

So, says Canada, we've learned our lesson ; we too will do it the Hollywood way. What is the Hollywood way ? Strong stories, interesting characters, action, conflict, and romance right up front ! Imitate that recipe, right ?

Right. And wrong. By and large, Hollywood's dominance in world film viewing can no longer be accounted for by empty, unconvincing imitations. Television, alas, has inherited them. The Hollywood "formula" today which produces the movies that everyone wants to see (successful, by the way, *both* at the popular *and* artistic levels) has two components, so to speak. On the one hand, the best American films still adhere to the popular approach outlined above. But — and this is what Canada must learn — the elements within that approach are revitalized, made immensely exciting and fresh by their enormous involvement in *American* life/culture/history/socio-political problems, by their artistic daring, and by their explorations of human nature and the whole human condition.

The examples are clear, all pervasive : **Apocalypse Now, Manhattan, Kramer vs. Kramer, Norma Rae, China Syndrome, Brubaker, All That Jazz, Being There**, etc., etc...

By all means, then, let's imitate Hollywood, but let's go *all the way*, by imitating what truly works for Hollywood. And above all, let's kill the false, inhibiting debate that has crippled our creativity for years; the one that sets up false oppositions between Canadian culture and art on the one side, and box-office-success/selling-out-to-the-Americans on the other. Canadians should try to make *good* movies. Period. If they do just that, instead of cranking out empty, soul-less copies, "Canadian" values and culture will surface.

In other words, use the Hollywood know-how and expertise, but inform it with our own spirit and involvement — just as the Americans do in their own films, which happen to be the best in the world.

The neglected area. One of the questions one keeps hearing nowadays at major international film festivals goes this way : "Where are those marvelous films you Canadians used to make ?" Indeed, any assessment of the present

POST
PRODUCTION
SERVICES

EDITORS CUT LIMITED
44 WELLINGTON ST. E.
SUITE 24
TORONTO, ONT. M5E 1C8
(416) 364-4038

situation has to concur with a major criticism of the entrepreneurial system : the rules of the "big" game have prevented small, inexpensive, personal, artistically or culturally ambitious films from being made — especially on the English-speaking side. The Québécois scene still permits a number of these films to do very well, and Toronto did have its **Outrageous** not terribly long ago — but the big money cinema will kill all of that.

Commercially fragile works must be given a chance ; and young Canadian directors need a developing ground. And so, the industry, along with *private* sector TV networks, such as CTV, Télémétropole, and Global, should join in with the various government agencies, such as the CBC, CFDC, NFB, Canada Council, and the increasingly important provincial bodies, in *rationalizing* the funding of these films, and in getting them shown. Models of cooperation in other countries abound. It is simply a question of getting together and planning ; and, yes, rationalizing what in many instances already exists piecemeal, with the clear realization that two different kinds of cinema exist, with different sets of expectations and rules. Is it not possible for Canadian groups, provinces, what have you, to work together, instead of undermining each other out of mutual jealousy, power, and greed ?

One could, of course, go on and on discussing various aspects of the present situation ; underlining the problems, pointing out the shortcomings. The process is a necessary one ; and indeed, if negative enough, it affords the Canadian soul limitless pleasure. Even the mere sketching out of the situation seems to inevitably lead to a gloomy conclusion. Is it all bad, then, and are those crying out disaster giving us a true picture ? I think not.

Production may have been reduced this year, but it is far from being wiped out. Canadian investment may not be as easy to come by, but it has not disappeared ; it is merely more cautious and demanding, profit-wise. A certain weeding out and tightening of the ranks is in evidence ; but that could be to the good. The industry is streamlining its operations, and getting itself seriously to the task of correcting abuses. That is *really* good.

Canada now has the real basis for a serious film *industry*. There is a growing work pool of skilled specialists for the many complex aspects of feature film-making. There are studios and labs. A class of skilled and experienced producers is in the process of being created. There are even mini-majors, Canadian style, emerging ! Above all, there are ways to raise money. Finally, very promising break-throughs have already occurred in the crucial area of distribution.

At these levels, yes, the progress has been prodigious.

And yet — and this brings us to an essential topic for this panel's discussion — the negative reports have persisted, especially since the Cannes Festival last May.

If we are to believe certain things written about Cannes in, say, *Maclean's*, or *The Toronto Globe and Mail* or *The Toronto Star*, the Canadian films — and the entire Canadian presence, really — were a disgrace. Some of the writers were angry — angry because a few CFDC-sponsored meetings or junkets took place on a specially-for-the-event rented yacht instead of in hotel reception lounges ; angry at the weather ; angry at Dennis Hopper's **Out of the Blue**, which was not even an officially accredited Canadian film; and angry at Gilles Carle's **Fantastica**. Canadian films were the laughing stock, we are told. The hype surrounding them was ridiculous. What's more, Cannes *proved* — by extension, mind you — that the *whole* Canadian feature film industry was, and *is*, a fiasco.

Excellent Québécois films such as **L'homme à tout faire** (**The Handyman**) and **L'affaire Coffin**, which were very well received, were scarcely mentioned in these reports. On the anglophone side, some of the least inspiring market products were used as key examples. The simple fact is that, few of the most promising Canadian films were shown "openly" at Cannes ; but *that* certainly did not prevent the publication of sweeping, all-embracing negative reports.

All of this, naturally, raises questions about critics and reviewers, about their qualifications and their responsibility. Critics are rarely held to an accounting. Too often, a smart, put-down, one-liner covers up lack of understanding or failure to do one's homework ; and personal biases, feelings, animosity, etc., can colour the critical outlook. More important, it often happens that a critic operates from unstated, or even unconscious principles — *a priori*'s, prejudices, ideologies — which he or she rarely has to defend, yet which determine the judgement.

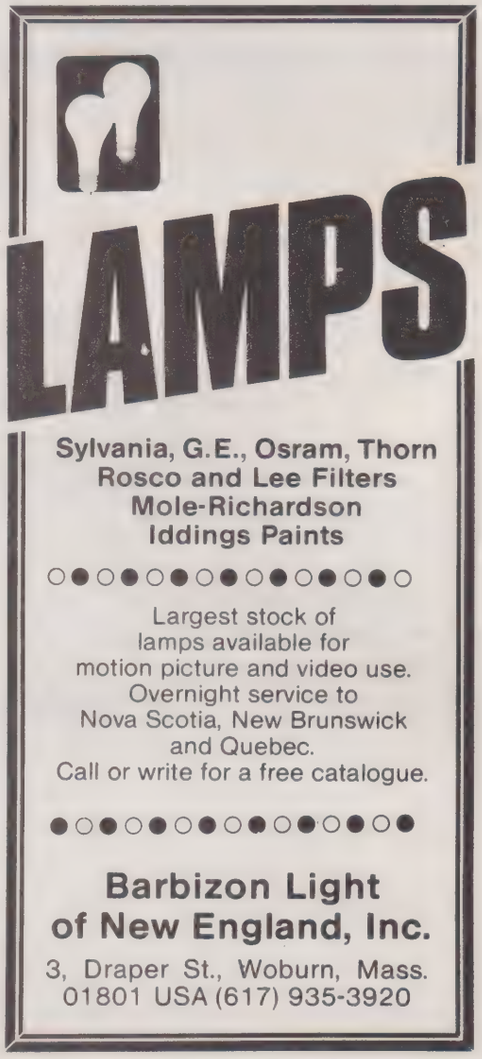
Be that as it may, such emotional and lopsided outbursts — giving in to the Canadian penchant for downgrading anything Canadian — could do alot of harm, not only with potential audiences, but with potential investors and government policy makers.

A much fairer estimate would be to point out that the last couple of years have given us, in addition to the many silly things, perhaps a dozen films that are solidly professional — not masterpieces, to be sure, but movies that can stand decently on their own merits. And I have a strong feeling that some of the films about to be released will furnish many of us with pleasant surprises.

The situation is far from being the disaster it is made out to be. Granted, criticism should be tough, but it should stop demanding a rate of success attainable no place else. It should also stop debasing an *entire* industry's output before even having seen most of its recent films.

We are in an enviable position right now. If we use the opportunities wisely, clean up our act, and avoid the very real pitfalls — in a word, if we use our native intelligence — then almost anything is possible. *Right now !*

Anything valid and durable, however, will always have to be based on the final consideration : the making of *good* films. Admittedly, the streamlining and improving on the financial side is of enormous importance. But the ultimate value has to be the movie itself. *That* is the bottom line.



ccfm sermon on the mount *by robert verrall*

Mr. Chairman, for identification purposes I would like to title these brief remarks "CCFM Sermon On The Mount."

I have the honour, and the duty, to represent some 11,000 members of the Council of Canadian Filmmakers. I believe that what I have to say will reflect the views of most of them.

From its inception the CCFM has lobbied vigorously for legislation which would increase massively the amount of money available to a financially starved industry.

The CCFM applauded the introduction of the 100% Capital Cost Allowance (CCA) as one of the measures needed to generate money for production, and this within the framework of a cultural program of relevance to Canadians.

We wish to be positive and forward looking, but this will be meaningless if we are unwilling to assess, and incapable of understanding, what has taken place these past two years or so, as a result of the tax shelter.

The program to date has been, for the most part, a cultural disaster, and I think we should have the guts to admit it. No amount of pointing to the need to establish an industrial base, and what Mr. Vennat calls "an infrastructure," will disguise the fact that we've been charging down the wrong road, motivated by a common human failing — greed. The program has been abused — there has been fronting and exorbitant fees with too much money going everywhere but on the screen.

Quotes from Maclean's Newsmagazine :

> *"With remarkable unanimity, these Montreal producers are concerned about the future of the Canadian film industry. All agree the boom is over. The debate is whether it will be followed by a full-fledged bust, or a mere settling-out. Says Guy Fournier, producer of* **Fantastica** *: "We've killed, or almost killed, public financing. There's been a lot of short-term thinking and a lot of films have been made that won't make their money back."*

If the CCA, which is in reality a form of public subsidy, is to be continued, and we believe its continuation is essential — for a number of years anyway — then we must be able to justify its existence before the public. This means we must demonstrate clearly that the abuses of the past will stop. We are in real danger of having created an industrial base and infrastructure in support of yet another branch plant. Surely this is a corruption of the original intent. We believe it's not too late to redeem the situation — but it almost is.

Regulations will have to be tightened, and in such a way as to encourage those Canadian producers who are both in charge of their own shops and committed to cultural objectives of value. Self policing will have to take place.

No one, of course, should be prevented from making films with foreign stars — or so-called "international films" — if they wish ; and if they can raise the money to do so (more power to them) *outside* the Tax Shelter. It is believed by some that without the glamour of big name stars and big-budget hype, investors will not be found.

We prefer to think that the worthy dentists, doctors, lawyers and others who have been willing to invest in film, may not be so cynical, or greedy, as to be disinterested in the cultural survival of the country — nothing less is at stake. If this proves not to be the case, then the tax shelter should probably be abandoned as unworkable. We say, let's find out.

Of course, the CCA won't solve all the problems, so a market mechanism must be found which will complement the CCA and create the incentives for Canadian distribution.

We believe that the notion, held by some, that culturally valuable films are necessarily non-commercial, is nonsense and ignores the history of cinema. Don Owen dealt with this yesterday when he spoke so forcefully about the fallacy of the presumed dichotomy between commercially viable entertainment and culturally important films. Australia is a good example.

Ten or more years ago the films of Don Shebib, Peter Pearson, Don Owen, Gilles Carle, Gilles Groulx, Claude Jutras, Allan King among others, were an inspiration to the generation of Australian filmmakers whose work is now increasingly in demand around the world and in the United States in particular ; films made by men and women with something of interest to say *about* themselves and *for* themselves. And because they do it well, they make films of interest to everyone. Perhaps we will now be inspired by their example. God forbid that they should begin to imitate us ! (Admittedly, it is more expensive to transport chequered cabs and American licence plates across the Pacific.)

Finally, a word about Quebec. I happen to be a member of an English-speaking minority working in Montreal. It was interesting, to say the least, to witness from that vantage point, the telecast last spring of the Canadian Academy Awards show — at a time when the referendum debate was heating up. What became clear to many of us that night was this : the issue in this country is not one of national unity, but it is one of national identity. Quebecers instinctively know this. To them, the show put on in Toronto — a celebration of a second-rate American dream — was confirmation of what they have supposed all along ; that the rest of the country, if it hasn't already lost its identity, is hell bent to do so. We say to the producers *and* investors — you have to prove them wrong ! ■

Robert Verrall joined the National Film Board in 1946. He currently heads the NFB's Studio B — the English production studio. He has been president of the NFB union, the SGCT (technical category) for the last two years, and was elected chairperson of the Council of Canadian Film Makers this year.

Arthur Winkler, CLU

Consolidated
Insurance Agencies Ltd.

Providing a specialized service to the entertainment industry since 1968.

Consult us for budget estimates, quotations or information about your insurance requirements.

3101 Bathurst St., suite 201
Toronto M6A 2Y1
Telephone (416) 787-0304

credit where credit is due

by stanley colbert

Last year money spoke louder than words. This year film industry analysts are making themselves heard. For Stanley Colbert, the message is clear: good films depend upon good producers who can pull more than just purse strings.

The wine was flowing and the platters of steaming meats were being stabbed at from all directions when an enthusiastic crewperson sidled up to me and nudged me in the ribs. The occasion was the wrap party for **Bells**, a feature film we had just completed with the ease and efficiency of a skilled surgical team dissecting a well-prepared patient.

"You're the producer, eh?"

I acknowledged that I was.

"Well," she said, with another rib nudge, "you keep the money comin', and we'll keep makin' the pictures."

If I didn't need her for my next picture I would have kicked her in the slats. On the other hand, if I was impelled to physical violence against all the people who think of producers strictly as moneyraisers, I'd probably be spending the rest of my days in jail.

And yet, as the industry is poised to jump to the next plateau of development — having failed to make a significant mark on the first plateau — there may still be hope for the Producer, that rare beast who is entitled to that credit with a capital P.

As mergers, public stock issues that include shares in the company as well as the pictures, financing and distribution oriented groups and boutiques all become the hallmark of the new plateau to which our industry appears headed, the gap between entrepreneurs and producers is widening. Pretty soon, it may actually be possible to tell the moneyraisers from the filmmakers, the business people from the creative people.

A preliminary shaking out of the industry this year has already revealed a number of people who are neither money-raisers *nor* filmmakers, past publicity and stock issues notwithstanding. All that now remains is to make clear that finding money is one unique skill; being a creative producer is another. Current thinking to the contrary, simply being able to raise the funds for production doesn't make one a producer. It also, alas, doesn't make one creative.

There are closets full of unspooled film that attest to this and, as we know, there are films in release that prove this beyond a reasonable doubt. Yet money and moneyraisers keep insisting on "final creative control" and keep getting it.

Now, I'm not disrespectful of the people who invest in films, or the people who assemble these investors, or even the people who assemble the people who assemble the investors. Clearly, the entrepreneurs have done a grand job of rooting out a couple of hundred million dollars over the past two years or so for motion picture production. That's a record that should make any country intent on developing an industry proud and happy.

So how come we're unsuccessful, in our perception of ourselves as well as the way we are perceived by others? The answer, I'm afraid, is that money not only doesn't buy happiness, it doesn't buy instant creative film skills either.

Stories are ill-conceived; writers are rarely steered and supported (or, conversely, they are over-abused by committees); directors are treated like temporary demigods and heaped with limousines and champagne (or, conversely, they are ignored unless they bear the Good Housekeeping seal of approval from someone else who hired them first); Hollywood agents and lawyers are presumed to be impeccable in their counsel while local agents and lawyers "don't seem to understand the problem." And so it goes.

Stanley Colbert is head of his own production company, Stanley Colbert Productions. He is also an executive producer of Film Drama for the CBC on special film projects, and has been a script development consultant for a number of Canadian and American film companies, and for the Canadian Film Development Corporation.

The mounting number of pictures that can't be cut, that can't be sold or that can't find an audience makes it easier than ever to suggest that our entrepreneurs, who are content to call themselves entrepreneurs, are successful : it's the entrepreneurs who call themselves producers who are killing us.

Hopefully, this new movement to a formalized business structure of certain companies in the industry is a move that could be in the right direction, if the people involved in these companies recognize that what they do best is finance and arrange for distribution of films. But they must also come to recognize that between those two functions is the making of the picture, and that function, in its entirety, belongs to a Producer.

That function and that credit is something legitimate producers in our industry should fight to define and retain. And talent should somehow band together to insist that creative control over their efforts as writers, directors and performers be vested in the hands of producers whose *skills* — not just their ability to assemble money — entitle them to such control.

While all of this may not be easy to attain, it is far more feasible than skeptics may believe. The new empires-in-the-making will be only as successful as the projects they are able to attract. And the skilled producer who knows how to find material and develop it, how to establish a collaborative relationship with a director, how to make and read a budget, how to work in tandem with key personnel in moving a film forward, within its schedule and its budget, may well prove to be the key to success or failure of these new structures in our industry. Recognizing that, the skilled producer may well be able to retain control over the destiny of a film until the answer print. At that point, line producers — who are no more than that — can return to being production managers, and those with more to offer can become their own masters.

The results of such a move might be remarkable, and a salvation for an industry which is still, for the most part, putting forth indifferent films to an indifferent marketplace.

First of all, a skilled producer is neither in awe of high-priced foreign screenwriters nor ineffective in working with a willing and skilled group of Canadian writers. The same producer can work confidently with some of the more promising young Canadian directors, instead of being limited to the same handful of so-called "name" directors who play musical chairs with Canadian productions with somewhat undistinguished results, not only in their work but in the marketplace as well. And they can confidently work with and build attractive and talented Canadian performers.

The recent Trade Forum at the Toronto Festival of Festivals made clear that interest in independent production is greater than ever. And the interest centered in low-budget production is not just because it appears easier to find a little money instead of a lot. Rather, it's because it's easier to control one's own low-budget production as opposed to someone else's high-budget production. The thrust, clearly, is towards control of one's own production. The opportunity, clearly, may be closer and more attainable than you think. ■

KEY TO QUALITY

KEY TO CANADA'S
FINEST OPTICALS

FILM OPTICALS OF CANADA LTD.

410 ADELAIDE STREET WEST
TORONTO (416) 363-4987

MONTREAL (514) 937-2336
VANCOUVER (604) 687-4491

Coming Right Up!

cinema canada

December Issue No. 70
featuring...

The trials and tribulations of the **Canadian Screenwriter,**
the complexities of **Film Copyright**
and much more...

Catch It While You Can!

(Why not subscribe today? See page 41)

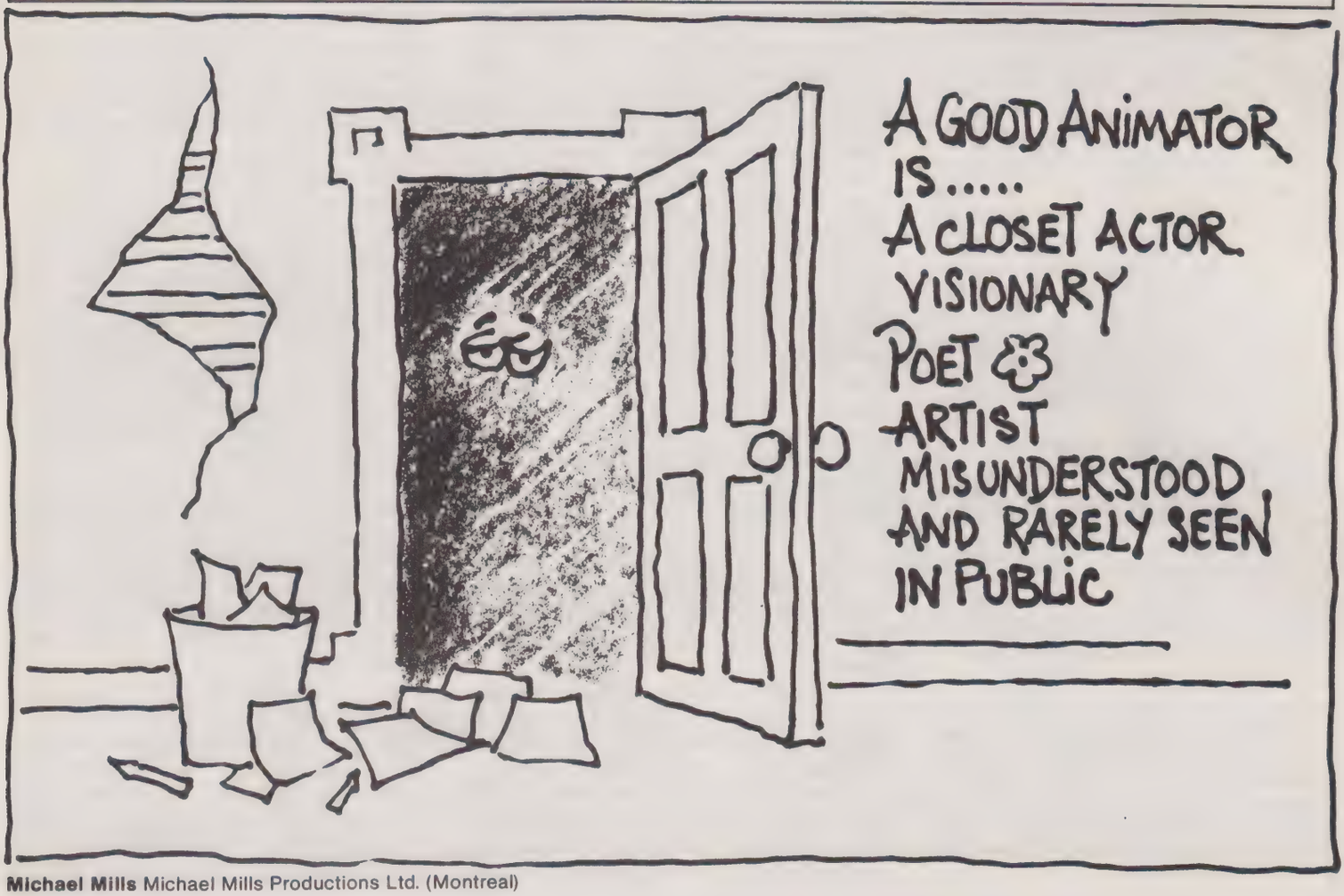
1980
ottawa international animation festival

gathering of the clan

by robert james hookey

In the field of animation, Canada has a solid reputation. Certainly, no festival could hold a candle to this year's Ottawa fest. It brought animators out of many closets and many countries; and a fine international time was had by all.

Cinema Canada asked five animators from across the country to describe what it is to be an animator. The following illustrations tell it like it is.

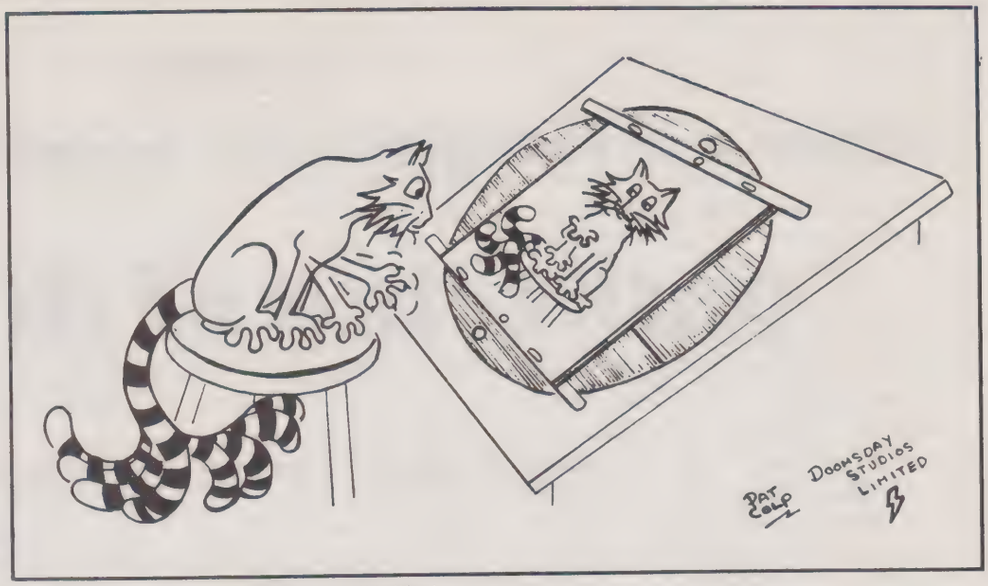


Michael Mills Michael Mills Productions Ltd. (Montreal)

This is one time when I wish I had a computer that would do the writing for me. It's not that my appetite for writing has been ruined, but how does one begin to write about a festival that was so rich in its programming and so challenging in its content? Perhaps, by focussing on the festival's two main ingredients. The first, most provocative one, was its attempt to help animators stop worrying and learn to love computer animation. The second, was its demonstration of the superb marriage between imagination and technique that is the crux of animation magic.

Artists have always had ambivalent feelings towards new technology. Since the nature of the artistic process is to seek new mediums of expression, computer animation would seem to be another tool to explore ideas and feelings. On the other hand, an aura of coldness and impersonality has clouded the computer's acceptability. This attitude has been fostered by science fiction and doomsday literature predicting the demise of man's freedom in the computer age.

Among the many talented animators drawn to Ottawa '80, the same ambivalence was evident. Judson Rosebush and Guy Nouri conducted seminars and workshops to help animators feel more comfortable with the new technology. Judson Rosebush is the president of Digital Effects Inc., New York City, author of *Computer Animation* and a former teacher of computer graphics at Syracuse University. His task was to create analogies in modern animation that would explain the roots of computer animation graphics. He told the animators that the traditional functions of exposing a frame of film allowed the animator to behave like a computer. The routine functions of calculating, moving to a position, exposing the film and determining whether or not the function is complete, is the way the computer could be programmed to function. The implication was that the computer could free the animator from the repetitive drudgery of this function. Judson screened the films of McLaren, Whitney and Alexeieff to illustrate visual styles that were similar to computer-assisted and generated images. The message was loud and clear throughout Judson's lecture. In short, the computer could offer the animator time saved, and freedom from the repetitive aspects of animation.



Pat Colp Doomsday Studios Ltd. (Halifax)

Judson Rosebush's lecture set the stage for Guy Nouri, author of the *Backstage* magazine series on "High Tech in the '80s," and a clever computer consultant. Nouri introduced himself and then proceeded to explain the purpose of his talk. "I'm here because a contract has been put out on your fear of computers." He emphasized that the computer is a dumb machine that needs the human brain to make it work in a useful and creative way. There are two types of systems available to the animator: computer assisted and computer generated. The computer assisted system could be wedded to the traditional animation system to improve the quality of the animation. Nouri envisions a time when the technician and the artist will collaborate to explore the artistic possibilities of a technology that is ripe for exploration and innovation. He mentioned the group CAF/CAN, that is interested in non-commercial and non-competitive explorations of computer graphics and the exciting potential of networking. Nouri sees Canada as the centre for animation innovation in North America and he encouraged the animators to embrace computer animation for both artistic and business reasons.

Reacting to the concept of computer animation, most of the animators I talked to were fascinated by the possibilities of this new electronic intruder, but were quick to underline its limitations from a human and artistic perspective. Jean Philippe Fauteux, a freelance animator living in Hull, Quebec, saw the advantage in the speed of the animation function. However, he thought it lacked animation feeling. It was too perfect; mathematically perfect. It lacked the individual character that can be present in traditional animation.

George Griffin, a prolific and profound animator from the USA, thought that computers had a future, which warranted exploration by the animator. One of the limitations he saw was that the "final result would be a small image for a small box." Griffin still liked the idea of working one to one with the material that constitutes traditional animation graphics.

Michel Ocelot, a talented and innovative animator from Paris, France, was very enthusiastic about the possibilities of computer animation. Presently working in cut-out animation, he is open to all kinds of new techniques. Animators are by nature very creative people who are open to new ideas. No doubt, once they have stopped worrying about the computer, they will learn how to use it to their advantage, without letting *it* use *them*.

In closing the festival, John Halas, president of ASIFA International summed up the impact of the festival's computer animation seminars by stating that, "The computer is a friend opening up new horizons for animation. It is here to stay. Use it to enhance the art of animation."

A smooth combination of imagination and technique was evident in the majority of films screened during the festival. There was a sense that the animators had rediscovered the art of the story, well conceived and told. The jury must be commended for their labour of love, that at times must have been difficult

---

Robert James Hookey is a free-lance writer and a teacher of communications, film history, scriptwriting and Canadian Cinema at Sheridan College. He is also secretary-treasurer of the Film Studies Association of Canada, and has been a judge for the Canadian National Exhibition student film festival for three years.

considering the quality of the animation. To come away from a festival feeling that many of the films deserved to be winners is a unique experience. But not only the winners warrant highlighting, some of the other films also deserve special mention.

In category "A" (films longer than three minutes), first prize went to Russian animator Yuri Norstein for **Skazka Skazok (Tale of Tales)**. This is a tour de force in animation technique. It was a dream about the horror of war through the loss of loved ones, the joy of birth and the vitality and beauty of youth. He creates an endearing creature that looks like a cute cartoonlike dog to escort us through the logic of his dream. The genius of Norstein's style is his depiction of images that are so human and sensitive. The dog becomes more than a cardboard cut-out; he is a sensitive and witty observer of the dream elements. The range of techniques used, such as cut-out, pencil drawing, collage, and watercolour, is carefully orchestrated to involve one in the reality of the dream. It is a complex and beautiful film that words cannot adequately describe; it certainly is one of the most evocative animated films I have ever seen.

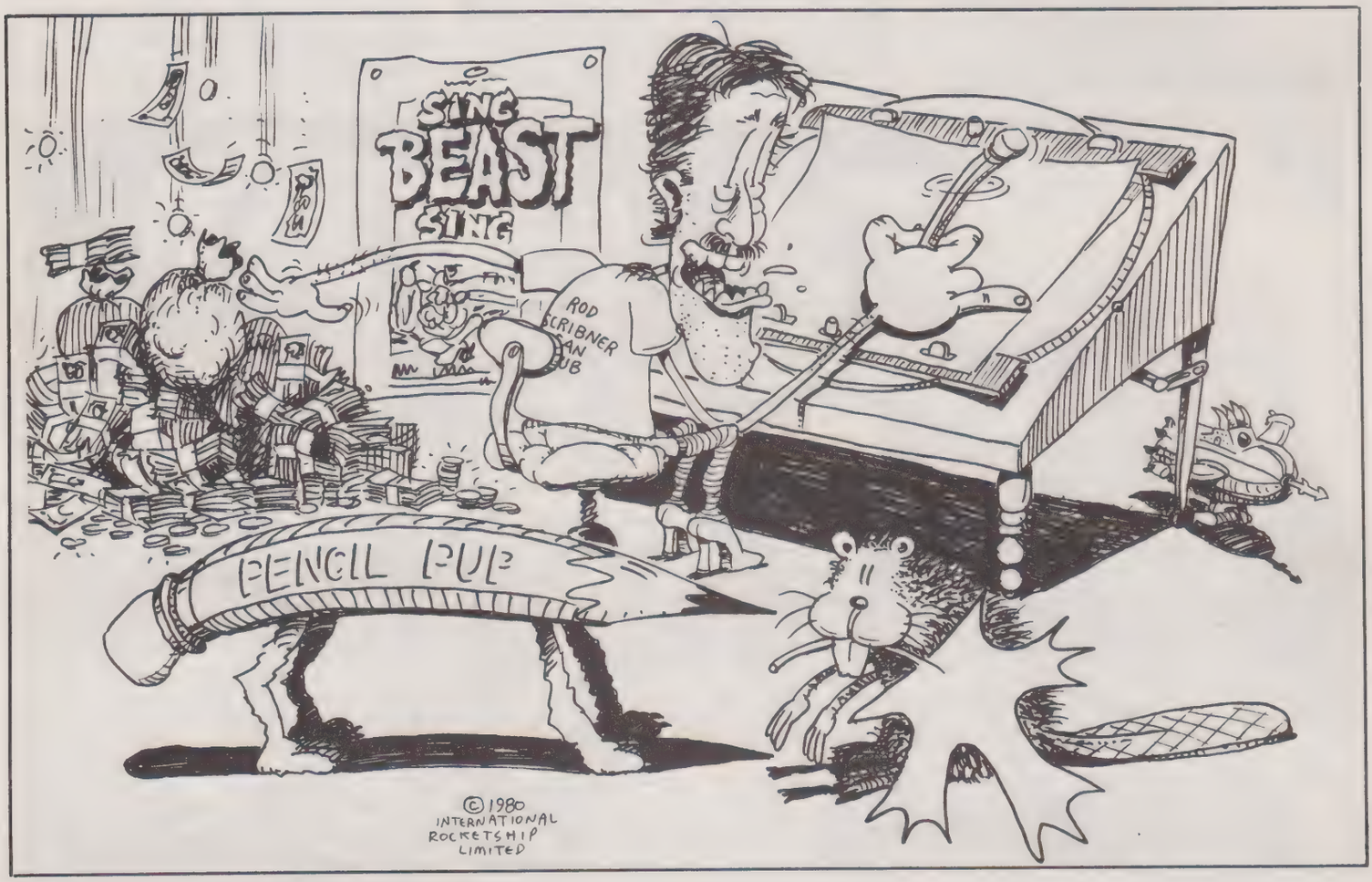
The Sweater, an NFB film made by Sheldon Cohen, is a charming film set in a small Quebec village of the late forties and early fifties. This film won second prize in category "A." There is only one hockey hero in the village. He is Rocket Richard who plays for the Montreal Canadiens. All the boys in the village wear the Montreal sweater with Rocket Richard's number on it, almost religiously. When one boy in the village is forced to wear a Toronto Maple Leaf sweater, because his mother ordered the wrong sweater from the Eaton's catalogue, the boy is personally ashamed and consequently held up to ridicule by his friend and the local priest.

Michael Mills won first prize in category "B" (films shorter than three minutes) for his film **The History of the World in Three Minutes Flat**. The film is a witty and compressed history of the world from creation to the present day.

Second prize in category "B" went to a magical film entitled **A Bogar (The Bug)** made by Ferenc Rofusz from Hungary. His film was also given the award for the most popular audience film of the festival. His film proves that a simple idea developed with superb technique can make for a compelling film. It is simply a film about the flight of a fly through the fields and into a house. The camera gives us a fly's eye-view of the fly's meandering journey until its life is terminated by a fly swatter. When I interviewed Rofusz, he claimed that the idea for the film came from listening to a Pink Floyd Album. Apparently this famous rock group experiments with a variety of sounds that reflect the environment.

Eugene Fedorenko, after receiving the Oscar for **Every Child**, was once again given commendation. His film won first prize in category "E" (First film). **Every Child** (sponsored by UNICEF for the year of the child), in a comic and compelling fashion shows the need for child rights in a world that is rapidly losing the security of family life and the desire to care. It is a story about an unwanted baby who is passed from house to house and finally ends up being cared for by some poor panhandlers in a junkyard.

Paul Fierlinger, of the USA received a well-deserved first prize in category "F" (Films for Children), for **It's So Nice To Have A Wolf Around The House.** It deals with prejudice, and a caring for others, in an entertaining way. A very old man lives with a very old cat, goldfish, and dog. Since they are unable to take care of themselves, they advertise in the



Marv Newland International Rocketship Ltd. (Vancouver)

Brad Caslor Credo Group Ltd. (Winnipeg)

Chuck Gammage Nelvana Ltd. (Toronto)

newspaper for someone to do the household chores. The ad is responded to by a wolf who claims he is a dog, since no one likes wolves. In the end, the charming wolf influences this household for the better.

First prize in the instructional film category was won by Lynn Smith of Canada with the film **This Is Your Museum Speaking**. A night watchman in a museum discovers the wealth of knowledge tucked away in the dusty recesses of the museum. This is an excellent film for introducing children to the treasures hidden away in dusty museums.

Ubu, a British animated film won the Grand Prix for Geoff Dunbar. This unrelenting film about the corruption in high places, has an animation style that is unique. The use of garbled sound, and cartoon balloons, adds to the grossness of the individuals consumed by power. In this film the corrupt survive.

Alexandre Alexeieff and Claire Parker of France were honoured for their pioneering work in pin-screen animation.

Some films did not receive the recognition they deserved. Michel Ocelot made a delicate and beautiful film called **Les trois inventeurs (The Three Inventors)**. The theme of intolerance is sensitively depicted through the lives of three inventors-mother, father and child. The community misunderstands their passion for invention and proceeds to destroy their work and finally their lives. Michel tells a convincing story with his cut-out animation characters which seem to breathe life. When you see the cut-outs burning you have grown so attached to the family that their death is a devastating experience.

An NFB film entitled **A Sufi Tale**, made by Gayle Thomas, is intriguing with its oil on glass technique depicting an old Persian lesson, in which a wise man allays the fear of a town's inhabitants about the unknown. In an interesting merging of vocal, choral sounds, with powerful animation technique, the fears and anxieties of the people are revealed.

Te Land, Ter Zee, En In De Lucht (On Land, At Sea And In The Air), by Paul Driessen of Holland, was an interesting attempt at animating three inter-related stories shown on one screen. He is a master craftsman who is constantly exploring the outer reaches of his craft. His work was given special recognition by Judge Tissa David.

My final commendation goes to Paul Mason of Canada for his film **Dragon Castle**. It is a fantastic fable, in plasticine animation, featuring a dragon, a prince, and moat monsters, and how they keep the king and queen warm. The film is enhanced by having children do the narration.

Along with the rich animation program and the informative seminars on computer animation, there were enlightening and entertaining retrospectives. I was thoroughly surprised by the Charles R. Bower film fest. This American movie pioneer combined live-action and animation to create a compelling comic virtuosity. A fine comic sense was present in every move he made. In the film, **Egged On**, made in 1926, he portrays an inventor who creates a machine that will make breakable eggs unbreakable. To demonstrate the usefulness of his machine, he steals eggs from various farmers. But he keeps breaking them as he hauls them in his car. Finally, he discovers that the safest place for the eggs is on top of the motor. He gets safely home, only to discover that the eggs are hatching little replicas of the car he is driving! Bower's versatility extended to both puppet and object animation.

An added feature of Ottawa '80 was the Videothèque, a CBC viewing centre for animation on video. With a growing interest in computer animation and the considerable out-put of made-for-television animation, this was a popular and busy spot during the festival.

Both Chez Ani, a place for animators to socialize and show their films, and the traditional picnic, were their usual success.

Ottawa '80 has developed into a world class animation festival. After your third anniversary, Ottawa '80, you're not getting older, you're getting better! Congratulations to Kelly O'Brien and the staff of the Canadian Film Institute.

Post Production Professionals

Editors
Screenings
Neg. Cutters
Sound Transfers
Quality Control

Editing Room Rentals

Millard Film Services Ltd.

425 Adelaide St. W., Toronto, Ont. M5V 1S4
(416) 363-1076

Motion Picture Guarantors Inc.

IMPORTANT NOTE

Guarantor's fees may be included in the 75% "services" category for certification only if the guarantee is provided by individual Canadians.
A guarantee by Motion Picture Guarantors Inc. so qualifies.

Bonding Available for the Largest Features
No-Claim Bonus Always Competitive

EXECUTIVE OFFICERS
DOUGLAS LEITERMAN PHILIP S. HOBEL

Motion Picture Guarantors Inc.

43 Britain Street, Toronto, Canada M5A 1R7
Telephone (416) 361-1664 TELEX 065-24697

211 East 43rd Street, New York, N Y 10017
Telephone (212) 682-0730

BOOKSHELF

by george l. george

Aspects of Cinema

An expert presentation of both conventional hand-drawn animation production methods and today's computer-generated and controlled systems, Eli L. Levitan's **Handbook of Animation Techniques** covers the procedures, equipment and terminology in this thoroughgoing and clearly presented manual. Illustrations are particularly abundant and well-selected, including photographs, drawings and charts (Van Nostrand Reinhold $24.95).

A definitive reference work on all historic varieties of cartooning from film animation to political caricature, Maurice Horn's **The World Encyclopedia of Cartoons** is a comprehensive compilation of outstanding aspects of the genre. Biographies of leading artists and surveys of their accomplishments, bibliographies and indexes comprise the 1200 entries of this substantial and informative 2-volume set (Gale $50/set).

In **The American Animation Cartoons**, a notable anthology of stimulating essays assembled by Gerald and Danny Peary, the contribution of individual artists and production houses to the growth in the U.S. of animation art and techniques is assessed in penetrating articles that reveal the scope and social impact of the popular medium (Dutton $10.95).

Film historian Leonard Maltin provides in **Of Mice and Magic** an engrossing and well-documented history of American animated cartoons. Rich in personal, technical, artistic and business data, this impressive volume offers a panoramic overview of the genre, its creative filmmakers and their work. Extensive filmographies, interviews with animators, superb illustrations add up to an entertaining and significant work (McGraw-Hill $19.95 to 12/31/80, $24.95 thereafter).

Audiovisual presentations, as enriched by new strides in creativity and imagination, are discussed in John Lewell's detailed and stimulating survey, **Multivision**. It documents currently available equipment and techniques, and discusses the medium's expanded value to anyone involved in design production and use (Focal Press $34.95).

In **The Documentary Conscience**, Alan Rosenthal, a filmmaker himself, quotes leading documentarians on the problems they have to surmount — underfinancing, limitation to free access, uncooperative participants — and upholds their tenacious commitment to a style based on truth and reality (U. of California Press $19.50).

Non-professional moviemakers in the documentary or fictional fields who are eager to advance creatively in their craft will profit from J. David Beal's considerable technical advice in **Adventurous Film Making.** In addition, interviews with several award-winning directors reveal their methods and experiences. (Focal Press $27.95).

Films In Print

Five new scripts have been added to the 3 previous volumes published in the Wisconsin/Warner Bros. Screenplay Series. Some 40 books are being planned by the University of Wisconsin Press, recipient of the Warner Film Library of 800 features and 1500 shorts of the 1930-50 period. Issued under the general editorship of Tino Balio, these texts constitute an invaluable resource for the broad study of the American film and specifically the art of screenplay during Hollywood's Golden Age.

The new volumes include **Gold Diggers of 1933** (Arthur Hove, ed.), **To Have and Have Not** (Bruce F. Kawin, ed.), **The Green Pastures** (Thomas Cripps, ed.), **High Sierra** (Douglas Gomery, ed.) and **The Adventures of Robin Hood** (Rudy Behlmer, ed.). Identical in format, the books carry introductions by their editors, stressing the salient points of the film and its place in the context of the period and the state of film art. The annotated shooting script follows, with cast and production credits, and 20 frame blowups ($12.50/4.95 ea.).

Another university-originated series, **The Asphalt Jungle** is now available in script form to scholars and buffs. Directed by John Huston, who also wrote its screenplay with Ben Maddow, this 1930 film classic is credited with starting a new trend in the realistic depiction of contemporary crime (S. Illinois U. Press $15/6.95).

In **GWTW - The Screenplay**, Sidney Howard's complete 5-hour adaptation of Margaret Mitchell's epic is ably presented by Richard Harwell. The book also includes an abundance of inside information, such as Ms. Mitchell's misgivings about the 16 writers assigned to the script, the cutting of 80 minutes from the finished film, and other incidents in the making of an eventually famous movie (Macmillan $17.95/10.95).

Author-director Eric Rohmer establishes in **Six Moral Tales** the story basis of his films, capturing subtle nuances in the feelings that affect relationships between men and women. Particularly interesting is the strong visual element Rohmer injects into this literary work — as elegant and tasteful an exercise in writing as is the delicately refined style of his films (Viking $12.95).

Celebrity Row

A father figure of the cinema is considered in Martin Williams's literate and perceptive biography, **Griffith: First Artist of the Movies.** Filled with anecdotes, quotes from his contemporaries and abundant source information about his films, this knowledgeable assessment examines the early influences that shaped Griffith's distinctive film techniques and the eventual decline of his directorial talent (Oxford U. Press $12.95).

In **Peckinpah: The Western Films**, Paul Seydor explores the themes, ideas and feelings that unify a self-contained group of 6 of Peckinpah's movies. Seydor's appraisals are incisive and thoughtful, based on in-depth interviews with a complex man, devoted to his art and often impatient with critical perceptions of his approach (U. of Illinois Press $12.95).

Neal and Janice Gregory, in **When Elvis Died**, describe the worldwide response in the media to the news of his sudden death, quoting from dailies' spot coverage and editorials appearing in leading newspapers, and assembling a documented record of international hysteria (Communications Press, 1346 Connecticut Ave., Washington, DC 20036 ; $13.95). In **Elvis, The Final years**, Jerry Hopkins recaps many familiar events — some significant, others trivial — that preceded and followed the singer's widely mourned passing (St. Martin's $12.95).

Academy Award winning George L. George is a film director who does film book reviews in Canada, France and the U.S.

BOOK REVIEWS

Self-Portrait: Essays on the Canadian and Quebec Cinemas. Piers Handling, ed. Canadian Film Institute, Ottawa, 1980 $ 8.95

A New York critic recently spoke of the "abysmally low reputation of English-language Canadian cinema," and wearily trashed yet another film that proves our "limited ability to restore conviction to derivative topical plots long since confined to TV movies." A few weeks later, reviewing his next Canadian clunker, he added that "Toronto is rapidly becoming the clone capital of North America."

Alas, it's only too true. The clones are everywhere and the government is aiding and abetting them as eagerly as Duplessis used to pay the multinationals to carry out our iron ore. The interesting Americans, like Richard Benner and Frank Vitale, have long since left, and the not so interesting Canadians like Plummer, Reitman and Bujold have all returned to circle the carcasse. Meanwhile, the exhib-distrib monopolies can't hide their glee that the restless natives are letting them off so easy. So what if Jack Lemmon praises the quality of our gofers and **Cinema Canada** fritters four pages away on how Canadians like chauffeuring Lee Majors around? Let's face it: the Canadian cinema is going through its most devastating Uncle Sam Attack since the days of the "quota quickies" and the Canadian Co-operation Project.

What has this got to do with the superb anthology on Canadian film history under review? Everything. Every page of **Self-Portrait** forcibly reminds you that the struggle against colonization has been the unremittant theme of Canadian and Quebec film history since the very beginning. And the book confirms in no uncertain terms that, contrary to the lies that tuxedoed crowd told us on the Genie telecast last spring, the situation is rapidly getting worse. Some last-minute additions paint a picture of the "branch plant boom" of the last couple years that is very bleak indeed.

The only relief from the general note of despair is Louise Beaudet's cheery and knowledgeable survey of the Canadian achievement in animation, and in some of the coverage of Quebec film, which seems in some sense to have levelled off in the late seventies as a modest but vital national cinema, stimulated by responsible state support and a devoted public. The contrast, as usual, will make Anglo cinephiles green with envy. Even in the Quebec articles though, there are dire warnings — Michel Houle concludes his remarkably sharp-sighted essay, "Some Thematic and Ideological Aspects of Quebec Cinema," with the anxious thought that he'll be out of a job in as little as three years, with only TV programs to write about.

Self-Portrait is a slightly expanded English translation of an earlier volume edited two years ago by the gifted film historican Pierre Véronneau of the Cinémathèque québécoise. New additions include a fine article by Peter Harcourt on 1964's two seminal films within our two cultures, Don Owen's *Nobody Waved Good-bye* and Gilles Groulx's *Le chat dans le sac*; it's a very depressing article if you compare the euphoria that greeted those two milestones sixteen years ago with the current atmosphere of sellout and bad faith. There is also Kirwan Cox's well researched chronology of distribution in Canada which rather well explains why we never had a chance. Finally the lists of major filmmakers and films have been greatly fleshed out and will get dog-eared very quickly. The same goes for the bibliography, which, incidentally, suggests a next project for the CFI: of ten published scenarios available, all are Québécois; I'm not recommending *Prom Night* for instant publication, nor, God forbid, *The Changeling*, but it would certainly be handy to have a few English Canadian classics lying around in book form, maybe *Nobody Waved Good-bye*, or even *Paperback Hero*.

Though some basic gaps in English Canadian film studies are finally filled by this anthology, perhaps its greatest use will be the wealth of information and analysis about Quebec cinema, never before available in such quantity and quality in English. This work, covering the first wave of Quebec features thirty years ago as well as the most recent one, and going into great depth on Quebec's most important cinematic idiom and tradition, Direct Cinema, will add enormously to English Canadian consciousness of Quebec culture. This will be particularly true if the current trend towards making more Quebec films available with subtitles continues. The Quebec slant to the book, and its not unrelated emphasis on the economic, cultural and ideological elements of our cinemas, make it an excellent shelfmate to the **Canadian Film Reader**, published three years ago. There's virtually no overlap, since the **Reader's** emphasis was more "auteurist," concentrating much of its space on those promising directors whom the current boom has put out of work.

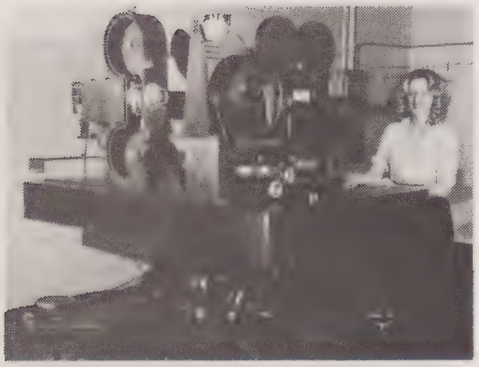
The only item that got left out of the new edition is a survey on experimental cinema, an unfortunate but necessary step, in my opinion, since the survey was erratic, to say the least. Otherwise, my only complaints are minor — some rough patches in the translation, a glaring misspelling or two of Quebec names, and stills that don't dazzle quite as much as the commendable reproductions in the French version.

All in all, **Self-Portrait** is another first-rate instalment in the CFI's series, spearheaded by miracle-worker Piers Handling, that has quickly grown to become the definitive body of literature in English on our struggling cinemas. Why doesn't the CFDC give some of its money to the CFI? — the CFI at least knows better than to pour it down the drain of the clone capital of North America.

Tom Waugh

Thomas Waugh, film critic for The Body Politic, is taking a year's leave from teaching at Concordia University to finish a dissertation at Columbia on Joris Ivens, and an anthology on radical documentary.

EQUIPMENT NEWS



Introvision Front Screen Projection

Introvision, a revolutionary, front screen projection process, which allows for a broad range of optical effects, has been developed by John W. Eppolito and Les Paul Robley.

Eppolito, Tom Naud and Peck Prior are partners in the Harwood Co. which, through its introvision subsidiary, will market the system to interested producers, and motion picture and TV studios.

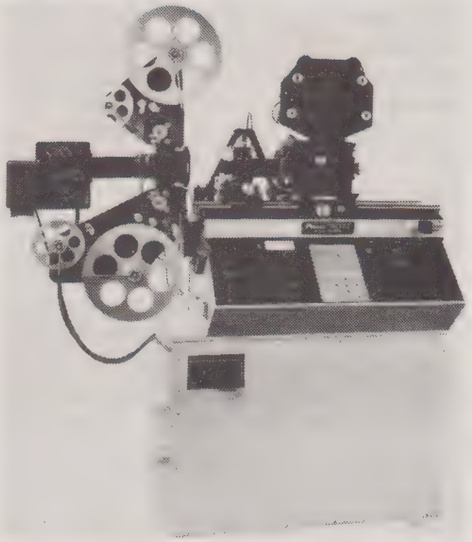
Introvision consists of a 3,000 lb. camera and projection platform and associated hardware, which permit the compositing of not one, but two identically matched sources of the same image into the recording camera in addition to live actors. This permits the elimination of expensive, finished sets in front-projection special effects — the actors can move in front of, or behind, any element in the projected image, maintaining realistic perspective and matched lighting, while in reality, in the studio, they are performing on simple platforms which can be erected quickly.

Advantages of this simple but ingenious system are that the director can see precisely what the finished composite will look like through the eyepiece of the recording camera; a composite which would formerly have taken weeks of intermediary steps, and lab work, can instead be screened the following day; the use of blue screens and matte lines are eliminated; and the final product is of first generation quality.

Elements of the finished composite can include any combination of still photos, motion picture plates, matte paintings or miniature sets.

To date, Introvision has been used on Universal's **The Incredible Shrinking Woman** starring Lily Tomlin, Warner Bros. **First Family** starring Gilda Radner, and most recently on **Outland**, a first film by Alan Ladd Jr.'s The Ladd Company, shooting in London, England.

For further information, contact: Mark Harris, Representative, Introvision Systems Inc., Suite 200, Bronson Bldg., 650 N. Bronson Avenue, Los Angeles, California 90004. Telephone: (213) 760-8870, (213) 462-1741.



Pioneer Cine's New Motion Picture Optical Printer

Pioneer Cine announces their newest and most innovative motion picture optical printer, the Model 7650LP. The Model 7650LP is the first and only optical printer featuring an automatic additive color lamphouse, with stepping motor drive system, that provides scene-to-scene color changes at speeds of up to 40 feet/minute. The printer will accept the Bell & Howell frame count cueing tapes and is completely compatible with R.F. and notch cueing. Standard features include an all-electronic photo-electric tape reader, electronic skip-add frame, camera follow-focus and automatic iris, 16mm and 35mm Acme Camera and film shuttles, Nikkor optics, linear/logarithmic fade and dissolves with range from 1 - 1000 frames, 2000-ft. projector take-ups and the Microtron electronic drive, and much more. For more information contact Pioneer Cine, 7702-4 Balboa Blvd., Van Nuys, Ca., 91406, (213) 787-9797. Telex: 651450.

Image Devices Introduces New Micro-Mixer II

Image Devices Incorporated announces the availability of the new IDI Micro-Mixer II. Small enough for a video recordist or technician to hand-carry with the recorder to location, the IDI Micro-Mixer II solves multiple shooting problems:

Compact size: 160 mm long (6 3/8 in.); 80 mm deep (3 3/16 in.); 55 mm high (2 3/16 in.).

Weight: .852 kg (1 lb 14 oz).

A new low-noise device reduces extraneous noises, assuring quiet background and superior sound recording through four mike inputs.

Input 4 and the output are both switchable to mike or line level.

LED VU meter has faster response time than standard analog meters.

Self-powered with either standard NiCads or throw-away batteries, the IDI Micro-Mixer II is designed for on-location use.

Price of a new IDI Micro-Mixer II: $595 with disposable battery pack; $695 with NiCad battery pack. Custom built-in options are available.

For further information, contact Image Devices, 1825 NE 149 St., Miami, FL 33181 or 1651 Phoenix Blvd., Suite 5, P.O. Box 490250, Atlanta, GA 30349. Call Toll Free 800-327-5181.

The Lowel Screw-In Stud

The Lowel Screw-in Stud is a new mounting device for attaching lightweight lights, small reflectors, and related location equipment, to flat wooden surfaces,

Lowel screw-in stud

thick beams, trees and other wooden objects, where the use of a clamping device is impractical or undesirable, and the hole left by the stud is of no consequence. The compact assembly has a standard, 5/8" diameter stud with safety undercut on one end, and a 3/4" long screw on the other. Threading the screw end in or out of a mounting surface, is facilitated through the use of a hole, cross-drilled through the Stud. A small screwdriver, inserted in this hole, provides the leverage to fully seat or remove the Stud, quickly and easily.

The Lowel Screw-in Stud was field tested at the XIIIth Winter Olympic Games in Lake Placid, where they were used to mount the location lights at the various press sub-centers within the Olympic complex.

The price is $8.50 for a package of 2, and the order code is LSS.

The New Lowel Lightflector

This medium-small unit reflects sun and artificial light. It can fit in most Lowel kits, yet is large enough to provide fill light for two people, head to waist. It can be stand or clamp mounted with its Tota-tilter. A constant tension "clutch" provides reliable rotation. Tilting and panning adjustments are precise.

When hand held, the Lightflector can be bowed convexly to reduce brightness and increase the area covered. Slight concave bowing intensifies the light at very close distances.

Both sides of the Lightflector are covered with washable, scratch resistant, aluminized Mylar. One side has "texture" to provide a soft, even light pattern. The opposite side is specular. Its extra bright, not very even beam, is intended primarily for bounce illumination.

Though not a substitute for large reflectors (Variflector II) it is ideal for automobile interiors, product shots, close-ups, etc. It can provide fill, rim or accent illumination. When reflecting a light source already in use, it provides additional illumination without additional amperage.

The Lowel Lightflector measures 15" x 24" x 3/8" (39 x 61 x 1 cm) and weighs just under 2 pounds with its Tota-tilter.

The cost of the Lightflector with its Tota-tilter is $65.00 (order code LFT), individually the Lightflector is $48.50 (code LF) and the Tota-tilter is $19.50 (code T1-36). ■

Why cross the border?

Proparms Ltd.

isn't just a weaponry house anymore.

It's special effects.
Machinists.
Divers
Props. custom-builders.
Multilingual.
Budget conscious.
and
wholly Canadian.

Call us at
(514) 658-5207
or write:
Proparms Ltd.
2932 St. Therese Road,
Chambly, Que. J3L 2B2

SERVICE ACCURACY EFFICIENCY

Custom House Brokers and Forwarding Agents

Get the Picture? You will if We Handle it

We Know Your Problems

AIRSPEED BROKERS (1962) LIMITED

40 University Ave.
Toronto, Ontario
M5W 1X2
(416) 977-3344

Members of Canadian Film And Television Association

FILM REVIEWS

John Trent's Middle Age Crazy

d. John Trent **p.** Robert Cooper, Ronald Cohen **sc.** Carl Kleinschmitt **exec.p.** Sid Krofft, Marty Krofft **co-p.** John M. Eckert **d.** Reginald H. Morris, csc **p.design** Karen Bromley **music & lyrics** "Where Did the Time Go?" & "Just Friends" by Burt Bacharach, Carole Bayer Sager **orig.mus.** Matthew McCauley **ed.** John Kelly, cfe. Based on the song by Sonny Throckmorton **p.man.** Ron Bozman, Liz Butterfield **loc.man.** Keith Large **1st a.d.** Barry Bergthorson **a.d.** David Coatsworth, Louise Casselman, Tricia Gallaher (Texas) **art d.** Jill Scott **asst. art d.** Dale Davis, Jac Bradette, Susan Vogelfang (Texas) Marlene Graham (trainee) **ward.** Linda Matheson **Ann-Margret's costumes** Theoni V. Aldredge **asst.cam.** Neil Seale (1st), Joan Hutton (2nd), Victoria Lowe (2nd, Texas) **cam.op.** Bill Steiner **sound ed.** Alban Streeter **re-rec.** Joe Grimaldi, Austin Grimaldi **sound rec.** David Lee **boom** Steve Switzer **set dec.** Hilton Rosemarin **prop. master** Doug Madison **make-up sup.** Maureen Sweeney **Ann-Margret's makeup** George Masters **hair** Malcolm Tanner **ward.** Marc O'Hara **gaf.** Ray Boyle **key grips** Jonathan Hackett, Bill Masters (Texas) **casting** Joe Scully Casting, Canadian Casting Assoc., Film Extra Services **unit pub.** Prudence Emery **stills** Shin Sugino, Marshall Marker (Texas) **script sup.** Penelope Hynam **p.acct.** Robert Duckworth **asst. to co-p.** Phillipa King **p.sec.** Judy Watt, Kathy Price (Texas) **consult. to Marty Krofft** Bonnie Dore **tech. ad.** Steve Moore **asst.ed.** Kevin Towshend, Richard Kelly **asst. sound ed.** Terry Burke, Haydn Streeter **ward.asst.** Ann Russell, Eunice A. Hall (Texas) **asst. to ward.** Angie Vastagh **asst. set dec.** Gordon Smith **asst. props** Robert James, Lewis Caldarera (Texas), Jim Reed (Texas) **best boy** Steve Ferrier **generator op.** Rodger Dean, Peter Dawes **asst. grips** Noah Farrel, Jim Krauter, Chris Espeset (Texas) **transp. capts.** John Cocks, John Plunker Sheedy (Texas) **p.a.** Tom Smith (Texas) **video coord.** Michael Lennick **Bruce Dern's suits** Saul Korman of Korry's **mus. consult.** Tim McCauley **mus. clearances** Mary Williams Music Clearance Corp. cam. Panavision **re-rec.** Pathe Post Production, Toronto **opticals and titles** Film Effects, Toronto **processing** Medallion Film Labs. **l.p.** Bruce Dern, Ann-Margret, Graham Jarvis, Eric Christmas, Helen Hughes, Geoffrey Bowes, Michael Kane, Diane Dewey, Vivian Reis, Patricia Hamilton, Anni Lantuch, Deborah Wakeham, Gina Dick, Thomas Baird, Norma Dell'Agnesi, Shirley Solomon, Elias Zarou, Michele Chiponski, Victor Sutton, Jack Mather, Jim Montgomery, John Facenda **p.c.** Tormont Films Productions Inc. (1979) **col.** De Lux 35 mm **running time** 112 min.

An affectionate toast to middle age craziness: Ann-Margret and Bruce Dern celebrating his 40th.

Away back in 1886, Thomas Hardy prophesied the dangers inherent in an increasingly commercial and urban society. In **The Mayor of Casterbridge**, a restless young lady from London explains the importance of image: "But settling upon new clothes is so trying... You are that person...or you are *that* totally different person,...and one of the two, you don't know which, may turn out to be very objectionable." She decides "to be the cherry-coloured person at all hazards," and her choice leads to disaster for others and for herself. **Middle Age Crazy** explores the same problem in a world where people believe that material goods define the man and his style determines his life. When Bobby Lee Burnett changes his clothes, he becomes very objectionable indeed and sets out on a course that could be equally destructive. But as his adventures are conceived of as comic, he pulls back in time. Unlike Hardy's lady, Bobby Lee is not all image; in the end he recognizes that values sustain him. **Middle Age Crazy** could have been entitled **Middle Class Crazy: A Morality Play.**

Bobby Lee, endearingly played by Bruce Dern, is the victim of a configuration of events: he turns forty, his son graduates from high school, and his father dies. Blessed with a wife who loves him and proves it inventively (Ann-Margret, looking like a well-preserved, energetic suburban wife, and showing all the hopes and the fears that go with the territory), he appears to have his heart's desires, as he celebrates his birthday with family and friends beside his garden pool and his glowing hot tub — the ultimate symbol of his good life. Two gifts, however, upset his equilibrium. The first, an elaborate Betamax, comes with a videotape made by his family. Their words speak not only of their love for him, but also of his trustworthy middle-class image. His son's girl — a beauty about whom he will fantasize — points out, for example, that Bobby Lee is a good "Olds man". The other gift, an old Westclox pocket watch from his ailing father (Eric

Christmas), carries more disturbing overtones. While in a sense he receives a gift of time, he is given it because he, as his father jokingly tells him, is now mature enough to assume responsibility for it. Bobby Lee is on the verge of being thrust into the role of family patriarch and into the next generation.

If his birthday and his wife's constant reassurances about how great he is for forty have made the hero restless, his son's graduation makes him reflective. The valedictorian enthuses on about the future, but Bobby Lee, a once-promising architect turned designer-contractor of Senor Abe's taco stands, counters her optimism with what he, in self-pity, considers the truth of his life. Live for the present, he would warn, for the future is only "fat butts, TV and beer."

Thus middle-aged and dissatisfied with both his past and his present, Bobby Lee is totally unprepared to accept his own future when his father dies. As his mother, his wife, his neurotic sister, and his troubled son all turn to him for help, he cries out, "I don't want to be the daddy!" Words get translated into actions. He sheds his Olds for a Porsche, his three-piece suit for cowboy gear, and his responsibilities for the irresponsibilities of a boy in a Halloween costume. He, who has always built, decides to renovate both his life and Senor Abe's private suite in the Dallas stadium. His choice of a partner with whom to be irresponsible is alarmingly suitable. The moist-eyed, sensuous Dallas Cowgirl (Deborah Wakeham) fits his new image, and, since his first love was a cheerleader and professional virgin, Nancy obviously fulfills his fantasies about the past as well as the present. Clearly, Bobby Lee is regressing. By refusing his proper role, he begins to destroy everything that is important in his life — his family, his work, and his own values. Not until his world is in ruins and he turns to "no strings" Nancy for comfort does he recognize the magnitude of his losses. Only then can he throw over the tawdry joys of the red and tinsel heart-shaped balloon tied to a white Porsche, for the comforts of an Olds in the driveway and a warm life in that ever-simmering hot tub.

It is not surprising that **Middle Age Crazy** is finding its audience, for it mirrors the concerns of 1980. Superficially, it feeds the modern preoccupation with "lifestyles" and catches the details of each with beautiful telling economy: mother's bouffant hairdo and pastel mink stole; father's Winnebago; sister's dramatically stylish, hard-edge hat (contradicted by her pigtail); the earnest shining face of the born-again Christian; the vulgarity of Senor Abe, whose foul language unfortunately pervades the film; the groping inarticulateness of the young; Nancy's clinging, red, pseudo-gym clothes; and the split-level bedroom with raised hearth of the affluent middle class. Yet, while these often provoke laughter, the effect is more generous than satirical. The focus is on Bobby Lee, not on his society.

More fundamentally, the times are ready for the film's comedy and its moral. Deftly directed by John Trent, the scenes end on good lines and cut swiftly to good visual laughs, and the movie paces itself to the hero's life reflecting his own sense of time. Moreover, in a year when the popular press has dropped R.D. Laing's notion of family-as-destructive, for articles on family-as-life-enhancing, **Middle Age Crazy** hits the right note. Today, facing up to middle-class responsibilities is once again respectable. (Did anyone else notice that abortion is never considered when Greg Burnett's girl becomes pregnant?)

Anna Carlsdottir

Claude Fournier's Les Chiens Chauds

(Hot Dogs)

d. Claude Fournier **p.** Marie-José Raymond **sc.** Claude Fournier, Marie-José Raymond **p.** Claude Fournier **mus.** Paul Baillargeon **ed.** Claude Fournier **sd.** Richard Nichol **l.p.** Harry Reems, Nicole Morin, Daniel Pilon, Geoffrey Bowes, Gilles Latulippe, Fione Reid **p.c.** Squad Film Ltd. (1979) **col.** 35mm **running time** 96 min. **distrib.** Cinépix Inc.

After playing leading man (the hood) to Linda Lovelace in **Deep Throat** and Georgina Spelvin in **The Devil in Miss Jones**, Harry Reems has decided to let it all hang inside as he makes his Canadian acting debut in Claude Fournier's **Hot Dogs** (formerly **The Clean Up Squad**).

This farcical whimsy is Fournier and Marie-Josée Raymond's two-dimensional kiddie story for adults about the misadventures of a police vice squad and its attempts to clean up prostitution. Fournier's warm colour cinematography makes the film appear to cost more than 1.8 million dollars.

In this ridiculous story there are no bad guys. In fact, everyone is likable; cute, luscious hookers, and just-a-job cops alike. Mr. Clean (Reems), the new head of the vice squad, is out to maintain his reputation as an efficient purveyor of correct social morality. "I'm not known as Mr. Clean for nothing," he boasts as he shows his vice squad slides of a deserted Yonge Street, his last conquest. The vice squad hot shots then proceed to entrap prostitutes and pimps, in scene after mindless scene — often fumbling their lures and arrests. One masseuse-hooker, upon discovering her client's badge, turns the sun lamp on his vitals for revenge. Cute? Perhaps. Funny? Snicker.

Chiens Chauds's first-week gross of $130,000, in Montreal and Quebec City, has set a new record for Famous Players Canada. Fournier, ever-popular since he made **Deux femmes en or** a decade ago, may explain the good box office — as may the presence of a host of Quebec film stars. Perhaps willing audiences want inflated funniness in these inflation-filled times.

The story: a cop, Morris (Geoffrey Bowes), loses his wife Lilli (Denise Naples), when she learns that her husband is dressing as a woman to entrap prostitutes. She in turn is swept up in a raid when visiting a masseuse friend and is booked as a hooker. A furious Morris vows to get rid of Mr. Clean. He hires Stella Moon (Nicole Morin) — who is to prostitution, what Mickey Mantle is to baseball — to seduce Clean, then take compromising photos.

But this is the new Harry Reems. He's all innocence, a boy scout leader and bird watcher, who's seemingly uninterested in sex, and impossible to compromise. Stella finally lures him to dinner but fails to entice him. Mr. Clean reveals his depth, when he explains that he likes his job because that's what he's paid for. They accidentally trigger the automatic sprinkler system and are drenched. Stella's pert breasts are now wholly visible through her wet see-through dress. Reaching still further for character depth, Clean, back at his apartment, explains how he has modeled himself after his father, a martinet inspector.

Stella's alluring bosom fails to make Clean think of anything but a hot bath and his rubber duckie. Stella soaps him

Looking for **Hot Dogs**? Monique Lepage checking out Gilles Latulippe's pocket

up but he resists. It's all very clean. Then, movie magic! They fall for each other. And while consummating their burning passion in the back seat of his car, Clean develops a crook in his back, only to get stuck in an uncomfortable missionary position. His car is towed to the police garage, where a welder must cut away the roof so he can be lifted out, and finally, straightened out at the hospital. At the same time, a group of transvestites and weight lifters are being herded through after vice squad entrapment at the Fire Island beach party. A reporter photographs the hapless Mr. Clean and when the photo hits the papers, he resigns. At the hospital, Stella visits Clean and swears her love. He will make her an honest woman with marriage.

The new vice squad chief is Benito (Paul Berval), one of the hot shot cops who is a pawn of the local godfather, Don Parchesi — amusingly burlesqued by Jean Lapointe. Morris and his wife Lilli are reunited as Stella and Mr. Clean are about to take their wedding vows. End of 100% Canadian feature film, financed by tax dollars, the CFDC, the Institute québécois du cinéma and Famous Players Limited.

This nonsense does at least poke fun at the whole vice squad concept, and the all-too-frequent entrapment techniques that police use to put pressure on prostitutes. Pity that Fournier and Raymond's screenplay missed the chance to comment on how vice squads seem to habitually rear their heads when city administrations wish to divert attention from municipal corruption.

There is a recurring, running gag involving Harry the Exhibitionist who, either in disguise as an armless cripple or package-laden consumer, lures women to reach into his bottomless trenchcoat pocket for change. He gets a free feel while the hapless do-gooders are grossed out. Harry the Exhibitionist's identity is the only surprise in the film.

A final word about Harry Reem's metamorphosis from prurience to purity. Seeing him stand on two legs instead of three, one can't help but conclude that he's as wooden as Howdy Doody's wooden...(ahem) head. While shooting in Montreal in 1979 he claimed that he wanted to be taken for a serious (?) actor. Who would have guessed that born-again Harry, with or without clothes, decent or indecent script, had it in him? It's lucky his colleagues sustain the film. With **Hot Dogs** executive producers Dunning and Link (of **Meatballs** money fame) may have found more gravy.

Gary Evans

George Mendeluk's The Kidnapping Of The President

d. George Mendeluk **p.** George Mendeluk, John Ryan **exec. p.** Joseph Sefel **sc.** Richard Murphy, based on the novel "The Kidnapping of the President" by Charles Templeton **story consult.** Barry Pearson **d.o.p.** Michael Malloy, b.s.c. **creative consult.** Henry Richardson **ed.** Michael McLaverty **art d.** Douglas Higgins **orig. film score** Paul Zaza **p. man.** Tony Thatcher, Angela Heald (asst.) **a.d.** Gerry Arbeid (1st), Don Brough (2nd), Maureen Fitzgerald (2nd), Goff Martin (3rd), Mark Johnston (3rd) **sec. unit d.** Larry Paul, Barry Pearson **loc. man.** Brian Ross, Marc Dassas (asst.) **cam. op.** Bob New, Paul Mitchnick (1st asst.), Marvin Midwicki (2nd asst.) **sd. mix.** Douglas Ganton **boom** Tom Hidderley **cont.** Pauline Harlow **ward.** Angie Vastagh (mistress), Sherry McMorran (asst.), Mary Ann Wilson (asst.) **hair** Victoria Truscott (design), Jocelyn McDonald (stylist) **make-up** Lee Kruse, Helen Crocker **asst. art d.** Lee Kruse, Helen Crocker **asst. art d.** Elinor Fairless Barg, Christine Mooney (trainee), Birgit Siber (trainee) **props. mas** Michael Stockton, Laird McMurray (asst.) **set dress.** Henry Ciolczynski, Lindsey Goddard (asst.) **spec. efx.** Peter Hutchinson, Richard Albain, Ron Pampu (asst.), Greg Cannom (make-up) **gaf.** Roger Bate **best boy** Richard Allen **elec.** Bill Brown **key grip** Norman Smith **grip** Mark Manchester (2nd), Brian Potts (3rd) **asst. ed.** Elaine Foreman, Michael Dandy **sd. ed.** John Kelly, Kevin Townshend, Elaine Foreman (asst.), Richard Kelly (asst.) **re-rec.** Nolan Roberts, Mike Hoogenboom **elec. music** Nash The Slash **carp.** Mark Molin **p. co-ord.** Janina White, Janefer Wyman Rosenthal **p. account.** Irene Phelps, Doreen Davis (asst.), Susie Lore (asst.), Roma Panczyszyn (asst.) **p.sec.** Lynette McPeake **asst. to p.** Robert McEwan **asst. do d.** Andreas Blackwell **driver capt.** Don Baldassarra **p.a./drivers** Curtis Brown, Michael Curran, Gail Heaslip, John James Houston, Izidore Musallon, Dilip Mirchandani, Tom Pinteric, Richard Spiegelman **l.p.** William Shatner Hal Holbrook, Van Johnson, Ava Gardner, Miguel Fernandes, Cindy Girling, Elizabeth Shepherd, Michael J. Reynolds, Gary Reineke, Maury Chaykin, Ken Anderson, Sully Boyar, Patrick Brymer, Jackie Burroughs, David Cadiente, Bob Collins, Michael Fairman, Buddy Ferrens, Mike Fortman, Frederick Franklyn, Chappelle Jaffe, Michael Kane, Michael Kirby, Paul Larson, William Marquez, Lynda Mason Green, William McDonald, Mina Mina, Myron Natwick, Aubert Pallascio, Steve Pernie, Virginia Podesser, Joseph Ragno, George Robertson, John Romain, Michael Ross, Richard Sargeant, Sandra Seacat, John Stocker, Angus McInnes, Wally Bondarenko, Richard Fitzpatrick, Paul Hubbard, Irving Link, Jay Nelson, Dini Petty, Walker Boone, Elias Zarou, Larry Duran, Bob Hannah, Joanne Lang-Hannah, Terry Martin; Karl Miller, Rick Parker **pub.** Stephenson Ramsay O'Donnell **unit pub.** Patricia Whittingham **casting** Canadian Casting Associates, Peter Laven-

Terrorist Roberto Assanti (Miguel Fernandes — right) threatening to blow up the U.S. President (Hal Holbrook — left) and everyone else unless his orders are obeyed.

der (extras) **p.c.** Sefel Pictures International Ltd. (1979) **col.** 35mm **running time** 114 min. **dist.** Sagenay Films.

One hesitates to massacre **The Kidnapping of the President**, if only because it obviously has no pretentions to being a thoughtful film. "Intermittently entertaining" has a nice ring to it. Yes, although it is handicapped by the generally uninspired and sometimes silly direction of George Mendeluk, and by Richard Murphy's mediocre screenplay, it is a competently produced, intermittently entertaining "action picture."

The film disorients and disturbs the audience at the outset, by leaping from the opening series of archival stills of past U.S. presidents, to a series of five gruesome killings in a South American jungle. These are orchestrated by a very ruthless guy named Roberto Assanti (Miguel Fernandez), who later emerges as the mastermind of the inevitable kidnapping. With his square-jawed, evil smile and pulsing forehead veins, Fernandez remains the most powerful character in the cast.

William Shatner, as White House Secret Service man Jerry O'Connor functions, up until the kidnapping, as a kind of Cassandra figure; trying to convince various CIA goons, G-men, and even Mounties that the President is vulnerable. He gets to say things like, "That's what they said about Dallas," and, "The President's life is in danger and you want me to brown nose?!"

Hal Holbrook as President Adam Scott, and Van Johnson as Vice-president Nathan Richards, both struggle with cardboard parts. Holbrook occasionally manages to rise above a dumb caricature of a "good" president, but Johnson is doomed to be a pink-faced, moronic parody of the ineffectual V.P. There was once a poor woman who lost both of her sons; one ran away to sea, and the other became Vice-president. **Kidnapping** depicts the resurrection of a spineless, corrupt V.P. to public life, due to the President's capture; and the portrayal isn't funny or moving; it's pathetic. Ava Gardner is unfortunate enough to play his bitchy wife, and their domestic arguments make for a couple of the worst scenes in the movie.

These weaknesses are meant to be absorbed, however, by the relentless unfolding of the terrorists' plans as the President arrives in Toronto, juxtaposed to the Washington sequences by predictable, but tight, cross-cutting. Mendeluk partially succeeds in this, cashing in visually on the Toronto skyline and setting up a nice tension among the three terrorists. Maury Chaykin adds a little comic relief as the goofy electronics whiz responsible for wiring the armoured truck in which the President is held, and Cindy Girling is quite intense as the third Patty Hearst-type terrorist. She doesn't know that Fernandez cut her sister's throat in Argentina, so there is a very kinky scene where he seduces her by handcuffing her to a heating pipe. Maury gets killed in a shoot-out with the Ontario Provincial Police on the way downtown, and then there are some good effects as Fernandez blows up a gas station, with Holbrook's voice on the radio spouting home remedies to the energy crisis.

When the surviving pair arrive at the Eaton Centre to implement their scheme, Mendeluk again relies largely on pacing to cover logistical flaws. That the terrorists can drive in behind Old City Hall without being searched is the first miracle; Cindy's escape and concealment in the crowd is another bit of cinematic 'legerdemain'. Most annoying of all is that, up until the climactic rescue, the armoured truck (which old Harv supposedly wired to blow at the slightest touch of heat or movement), withstands all the clumsy poking, scratching, and torching of Shatner and company. After the soundtrack has been overwhelmed for the third or fourth time by the sinister sounds of the bomb mechanism, we begin to wonder just what *will* set the damn thing off.

SPOT LABS LTD
487 ADELAIDE ST. W., TORONTO, ONT. M5V 1T4 • 366-8001

offers you the experience of 10 years' service to the industry

-35mm negative processing and dailies
-16mm negative processing and dailies
-16mm contact and reduction prints
-35mm and 16mm commercials

Extensive experience with European and U.S. features

There are a few, good, isolated bits which deserve mention. Aubert Pallascio's impersonation of Trudeau is amusing, complete with the arrogant shrug, as he arbitrarily hands the crisis over to Shatner and tells him to keep it quiet. The nicest, unintentional irony in the film is that the police refer to Jackie Burroughs as "our actress"; she could have done much to help the drama if she had been more than a "woman agent". Gary Reineke is effective as Shatner's rival Deitrich, the small-minded ass from the CIA. There is one, strong, tragi-comic vignette when Shatner shoots an English Jesus freak, Patrick Brymar, as he tries to reach the truck in order to "save" the President.

The big question in the movie — whether to give in to terrorists for the sake of the President's life — is not explored so much as exploited. The yes/no vacillations are meant to heighten suspense, but instead, they augment the sense that most of the authorities in the film, from the cops to the President, are shallow, incompetent, trigger-happy, or just stupid. Watery-eyed and desperate (to save the movie?), Shatner combines his efforts with the Toronto police chief, Michael J. Reynolds, to stumble through them all toward the semi accidental events which resolve the crisis.

The final, disconcerting piece of direction and editing occurs at the end when, up until two seconds before the explosion, it appears that Shatner and Holbrook are just getting out of the truck. The next thing we know, they're behind sandbags at a safe distance, breathing calmly as the flames light up Nathan Phillips Square.

Really, George. You watch too much T.V.

Chris Lowry

George Mihalka's **Pinball Summer**

d. George Mihalka **p.** Jack F. Murphy **exec. p.** Dan Weinzweig **assoc. p.** Fred Fox **sc.** Richard Zelnikes **story** Fred Fox **d.o.p.** Rodney Gibbons **art. d.** Csaba Kertesz **ed.** Ion Webster **line p.** Bob Presner **mus. & arrang.** Jay Boivin, Germain Gauthier **story ed.** Fred Fox, George Mihalka **cast. & dialog. coach** Arden Ryshpan **script & cont.** Joanne Harwood **a.d.** François Ouimet (1st), Otta Hanus (2nd), Normand Plessis-Belair (3rd) **unit/loc. man** John Desormeaux **1st asst. cam./2nd unit op.** Bert Tougas **asst. cam.** Glen MacPherson (2nd), Marc Hebert (3rd) **key grips** James Gray, Marc De Ernsted **2nd grip** Charles Toupin **gaf.** Walter Klymkiw **best boy** François Vincellette **2nd elec.** Arshad Shah **sd. rec.** Donald Cohen **boom** Lewis Wolfe **sd. ed.** Marcel Pothier, Anne Whiteside (asst.) **mus. ed.** Greg Glynn, Rick Elger, Ian Ferguson **sd. mix** David Appleby, Dino Pigat (asst.) **add. re-rec.** David Higgs **post sync. rec.** Gary Bourgeois **post sync. efx** Terry Burke **asst. ed.** Michel Juliani, Tony Reed, Judy Palnick, Frederico Saltzmann **prop. mas.** Peter McMillan, Andrew Deskin **asst. prop.** Dominique Sanche **asst. art d.** Myles Clarke **set dec.** Peter Dowker **construc. man.** Mike Waterman **set carp.** Ryal Cosgrove, Dean Eilertson **costumes** Laurie Drew **dresser** Corinne Verzier, Sylvie Montet (asst.) **ward. asst.** Sylvie Boucher **make-up** Chantal Ethier, Tara Workman (asst.) **hair** Benjamin Robin **special efx** Josef Elisner **stunt co-ord.** Jerome Tiberghien **motorcycle stunt adviser** David Israel **stunt doubles** David Israel, Andrew Deskin, Claude Chausse **pinball adviser** Jill Golick **stills** Piroska Mihalka **post p. superv.** George Mihalka, Ion Webster **p. account.** Pierre Guévremont **p. sec.** Elvira Rychlak **p.a.** Fred Berlin, Cheryl Buckman, Michel Guay, George Hanus, Dominique Landry, Jacques Ouimet, Joanne Ryshpan, Theresa Schwartz, Yves Tessier **pre-p. asst.** Bruce Welik **l.p.** Michael Zelniker, Carl Marotte, Karen Stephen, Helene Udy, Tom Kovacs, Joey McNamara, Joy Boushell, J. Robert Maze, Matthew Stevens, Sue Ronne, Bob King, Rob Stein, Rob Ferguson, Roland Nincheri, Lyn Jackson, Margaret Gadbois, Riva Spier, Eve Robin, Dick Grant, Steve Michaels, Sheila Graham, Don Pinatel, Peter MacMillan, Wally Martin, Bob Presner, Marc Denis, Arthur Smith, Mike Tomasek, Willy Wood, Ruth Sohmer, Pamela Smith, Joan Garnett, Dawn Dowling, Brenda Claire Hall, Kathy Pedersen, Lucy Topetta, Darlene Purkess, Wendy Dye, Susie Glynn, Johanne Sheehy, Ann Pilon, Renzo Tettamanti, Peter Kreisman **pub.** David Novek, Mary Trees **p.c.** Pinball Summer Inc. (1979) **col.** 35mm **running time** 97 min. **dist.** Astral Films Ltd.

Question : Name a Canadian B feature which cost less than one million dollars, is chock full of tits and ass, celebrates the sexual surcharge of adolescence, and gives the viewer "contact indigestion" from all the burgers, fries and cola.

The answer : **Pinball Summer**, one of the few 1979 Canadian features which made it out of the can and onto the screen.

Here are all the clichés of this genre : suburbanite kids cruising in cars, bad boy greasers on motorcycles, bumbling police chases, mooning, flashing, burping, petting, but no fornication. If there's any moral, it's that jiggling and comely breasts in T-shirts are for fondling, but good girls *don't*.

In scene after scene of this mindless puerile pap, producer Jack Murphy and director George Mihalka hope to titillate with gags and giggles. In fact, **Pinball Summer** is more like a Mr. Clean version of a 42nd Street peep show. The tempo is set by the frequency of appearance of nubile breasts and limbs, all orchestrated to stimulate an already overstimulated male adolescent libido. The image of women is early Neanderthal, ornamental and passive, with a hint of sibling

Pinball pinup Joy Bouschell "charmed" the spots off a leopard for this one.

lesbianism. The story is a combination of **The Wild Ones**, minus dramatic tension, **American Graffiti**, minus the cool cars and **Gumball Rally**, minus the race.

But who cares? The plot, about a pinball championship where the winner is to get a trophy and the pinball queen, is all quite incidental to the froth which these young cinéastes are trying to celebrate. I wonder what kind of impact a film like this would have on an alien being — armed with a Classics Illustrated Freud — who was looking for symbolic meanings?

First, the oral gratification aspect. Repeated scenes in the suburban hamburger joint show the cast stuffing their faces with junk food while washing the glop down with cola and a background of imitation Beach Boys. (Was Coke a sponsor of this long commercial?) How about anal fixation? Two suburban heroes stuff more abominable food into the tail pipe of the smart rich kid's car at a drive-in. The car regurgitates (evacuates?) it onto the window of the town alderman's Cadillac as he and a female object fondle each other before a backdrop of Hollywood's forgettable **Krakatoa, East of Java**.

The greaser Burt tries to steal away the suburbanite Greg's girl. So Greg steals Burt's motorcycle, which he drives off a pier and into a lake, to the tune of Burt's idiotic, plaintive cries — "You drowned my bike! It doesn't even know how to swim!" Later they duel it out at the pinball contest, where Burt's fraudulent victory is exposed by Wimp, a wimp. A chase ensues, Burt see his shack demolished, and Sally the waitress (of whose mountainous breasts everyone is waiting for another peek) is left sexually straddling a talking pinball machine in the middle of a highway. Curious creatures these North Americans.

The scene of the pinball contest typifies the film's ambience. In the contest audience, a mindless mute (line producer Bob Presner) throws handfuls of popcorn into the air, catching only a few kernels in his open mouth — the rest scattering helter-skelter on all those about him, including a peripatetic flasher. The scenes of this film are so many popcorn kernels falling around us too. Only a few are ingested.

If **Pinball Summer** is supposed to be fun and mindless, despite all the grass smoke wafting across the screen (both *in* the film itself, and in the theatre) there just weren't enough laughs. Amusement? About as satisfying as a pinball game at eight times the cost. In places Rodney Gibbon's camera work was sloppy. (Who kept bumping the camera during the chases?) And attempts to be artistic by shooting directly into the sun on water produced terrible colour fading.

As for Canadian content, the film's constant emphasis on American flags (even joints are rolled in Stars and Stripes!) reflects the Canadian compulsion to make it in the States by out-Yanking the Yanks. Good Canadian content is invisible anyway, eh? Then again, the CFDC put no money in. Remarkably, this film has acquired U.S. and foreign distribution — no small feat for the director/cinematographer duo's first feature after graduating from Concordia University's Cinema Program.

Sonolab inc
FROM SCRIPT TO SCREEN
CANADA'S LARGEST MOTION PICTURE PRODUCTION CENTRE
1500 PAPINEAU STREET, MONTREAL, QUEBEC, CANADA H2K 4L9 (514) 527 8671 TELEX 05 267329

Whether or not **Pinball Summer** reaches the adolescent, and post-adolescent market it aims down for, is a moot point. I heard one fiftyish matron sigh upon leaving the theatre, "It's frightening if you have young kids." I think she was bemoaning the film's reflection of the adolescent's never-ending wrestling match with runaway hormones and unrequited sexuality.

An alien being exposed to this supermarket of sexual innuendo with no sex might conclude that play, fantasy and consumption with no consummation are what earth creatures do. Or perhaps suburban survival from junk food overdose is the latest adaptation of the Margaret Atwood "survival is Canadian" litany.

Gary Evans

John Huston's **Phobia**

d. John Huston **exec.p.** Larry Spiegel, Mel Bergman **p.** Zale Magder **sc.** Lew Lehman, Jimmy Sangster, Peter Bellwood **story** Gary Sherman, Ronald Shusett **asst. to Mr. Spiegel/Mr. Bergman** Judy Goldstein **mus.** André Gagnon **d.o.p.** Reginald H. Morris, C.S.C. **co-ord.** Alice Ferrier **p.man** David Sheperd, Emily Eng (asst.) **loc.man** Barry Bergthorson **sec.** Monique Savarin, Sue Murdoch **loc.audit.** Edythe Hall, Penny Royce (asst.) **assoc. to Mr. Huston** Gladys Hill **a.d.** David Robertson (1st), Richard Flower (2nd), Karen Pike (3rd), Louise Casselman (3rd) **p.design.** Ben Edwards **art.d.** David Jaquest, Joe Cselenyi (asst.) **set dec.** Andree Brodeur, Chris Biden (asst.) **cam.op.** Murray Magder, Neil Seale (1st asst.), Mike Hall (2nd asst.), Kerry Smart (3rd asst.) **gaf.** Chris Holmes **best boy** Tony Eldridge **elec.** Ron Chegwidden, John Spurell **generator op.** John Ferguson **key grip** John Hackett, Jim Krauter (2nd), Wayne Goodchild (3rd) **prop. master** Elena Kenny, Hilton Rosemarin **script superv.** Blanche McDermaid **make-up** Kathy Southern **hair** David Beecroft **ward.** Aleida Macdonald, Ann Russell (asst.) **sd.rec.** Noland Roberts **boom** Herb Heritage & Tim Roberts **driver capt.** Jim Kennedy **head driver** John Cocks **craft service** Brad Blackwood **casting dir.** Vicki Mitchell **casting extras** Peter Lavender **ed.** Stan Cole, Bruce Lang (asst.), Gilles Le Clair (asst.) **sd.ed.** Peter Burgess, Jeremy MacLaverty (2nd) Gary DaPrato (asst.) **mus.superv.** Tim McCauley **re.rec.** Paul Coombe, Mike Hogenboom **spec.efx** Martin Malivoire **stunt co-ord.** Paul Nuckles, Bob Hannah **stunt persons** Greg Gault, Jack Verboise, Joie Chitwood, Moo Herbst, Gloria Fioriomonte, Terry Martin, Joanne Lang-Hannah **stills** Anthony Bliss **psych. consult. to Mr. Huston** Melvyn Hill, Ph.D. **l.p.** Paul Michael Glaser, John Colicos, Susan Hogan, Alexandra Stewart, Robert O'Ree, David Bolt, David Eisner, Lisa Langlois, Kenneth Welsh, Neil Vipond, Patricia Collins, Marian Waldman, Gwen Thomas, Paddy Campanero, Gerry Salsberg, Peter Hicks, Joan Fowler, John Stoneham, Terry Martin, Ken Anderson, Janine Cole, Karen Pike, Wendy Jewel, Coleen Embry, Diane Lasko **p.c.** Borough Park Productions (1979) **col.** 35 mm **running time** 91 min. **distrib.** Paramount Pictures

Despite the rather Hobbesian reviews **Phobia** has received in the Toronto press, it isn't that bad. Despite what Jay Scott would have you believe, it is not the worst film that John Huston has directed (remember, we have here the director of such yawn-inducers as **The Misfits, Night of the Iguana** and **Heaven Knows, Mr. Allison**), it is not the worst Canadian film of the year (there's **Prom Night,** for starters), and although it is certainly negligible as art or commerce, it has a few things going for it.

Despite the singularly dull presences of Paul Michael Glaser, Susan Hogan and John Colicos in the leads, there are some good performances from: Alexandra Stewart, who is unfortunately killed off in the first reel; David Bolt, as a timid acrophobic; and most memorably, David Eisner, who in one brief description of his lack of courage, gives one of those oddly angled, jittery bits that have been an Hustonian hallmark since Peter Lorre's entrance in **The Maltese Falcon** almost forty years ago.

The story concerns a group of five phobic patients under the treatment of Dr. Ross (Glaser): an agoraphobe (Stewart), a claustrophobe (Eisner), an acrophobe (Bolt) an ophiophobe (Robert O'Ree), and a girl terrified of men (Lisa Langlois).

One by one they are killed off in ways appropriate to their fears. Enter a scenery-chewing detective (Colicos, of course), determined to get to the bottom of things. Scattered about are Ross's old and current girlfriends (Hogan, and, in a nicely underplayed turn, Patricia Collins). Of course, at the bottom of it all is Doctor Ross (This becomes apparent about half-way through the film).

The narrative inconsistencies could fill several volumes. Ross, for example, is from California, but his accent is pure Brooklyn. The detectives take their suspect for the first murder and brutalize him for no apparent reason. Ross's "radical" technique, of helping his patients overcome their fears by exposing them to what they fear, is almost as old as psychotherapy.

Phobia's real significance, however, comes from the very precise ways in which it demonstrates exactly what is

Trying to conquer her **Phobia** of open spaces, medical patient Alexandra Stewart in a sudden panic.

wrong with the Canadian cinema. John Huston is without question the best director ever to make a Canadian film. So why did the producers hire one of the last of the old masters, to knock out the kind of story which is regularly knocked out by first-time directors? (The sort of thing that a Carpenter, or a dePalma, does with his eyes closed). Huston's great virtues are as a storyteller (note the sweep of **The Man Who Would Be King**, and the relaxed orneriness of **The Life and Times of Judge Roy Bean**), and as a director who can get his characters to inhabit real places — as in the extraordinary cityscapes of **The Asphalt Jungle** and **Fat City.** He has never been wound tight enough to deliver that remorseless little horror thriller that **Phobia** so longs to be. Therefore, we must ask why he was hired. For the class of his name? To control John Colicos?

John Trent, in a recent **Toronto Star** interview, claimed that the Canadian cinema is a producer's, rather than a director's cinema. This would be no problem, if the producers hired the right directors for the job.

Mind, Huston did bring something to **Phobia** — aside from a mere forty-odd years of experience. He gave it a visual sense, which brought out the best in cinematographer Reginald Morris. One need only compare the bland, television look of **Middle Age Crazy,** which Morris lensed for Trent, with the mysterioso darkness that crowds the edge of the frame in **Phobia.** This points the way to a second problem in Canadian movies. With the possible exception of David Cronenberg, is there a single English Canadian director with a distinctive look, or even any visual flair? **Phobia** is the first Canadian film I've seen since **The Brood** that hasn't resembled a bad CBC drama; that looks as if someone actually sat down and thought about how a movie is *supposed* to look. Contrasting the appearance of recent American films to recent Canadian features, there can be no question as to which side wins. Where are our Carpenters, our dePalmas, our Scorseses — directors whose films are both commercially successful and artistically exciting to look at? Even films like **Days of Heaven** and **The Black Stallion**, which exist in complete intellectual vacuum, are stunning to look at. Until our producers begin to concern themselves with films as more than tax shelters for dentists, and "packages" of talent with "proven" ingredients (out-of-work TV stars, aging hams, hack directors, and plots made out of elements that weren't very good to begin with), we are doomed to second-rate, cinematic, junk food that nourishes neither the mind nor the adrenaline glands.

Phobia itself is destined to become a footnote to a great director's career, nothing more.

John G. Harkness

John Guillermin's **Mr. Patman**

d. John Guillerman **p.** William Marshall, Alexander MacDonald **exec. p.** Herk Van der Kolk **sc.** Thomas Hedley **d.o.p.** John Coquillon, bsc. **art d.** Trevor Williams **ed.** Vince Hatherly, Max Benedict **mus.** Paul Hoffert **p. man.** Marilyn Stonehouse **loc. man.** Gordon Mark **a.d.** Tony Lucibello (1st), Fred Frame (2nd), Mia Laschuk (3rd), Doug White (3rd) **p.a.** Chris Whitside, Steve Marshall **asst. to p.** Helga Stephenson **cont.** Natalie Drache **casting direc.** Karen Hazzard (T.O.), Lindsay Walker (Vancouver) **psychiatric consult.** Dr. James E. Miles **p. sec.** Cathy Howard **sec.** Jan Block **p. account.** Heather McIntosh, Sandra Palmer (asst.), Leslie Mark (clerk), Sue Anderson (post-prod.) **bookkeeper** Linda Goldstein **cam. op.** Tom Laughridge, Dick Meinardus (1st asst.), Brent Spencer (2nd asst.) **stills** Phil Hersee **loc. sd. mix** Brian Simmons **boom** Roland Fowles **sd. asst.** Richard Patton **asst. ed.** Maureen Levitt (1st), Mike Smith (2nd) **sd. ed.** Peter Phillaye, Wayne Griffin **asst. sd. ed.** Bruce Giesbrecht, Gordon Thompson **post sync. efx** Terry Burke, Glen Gauthier **engineered by** Jack Heeren **re-rec.** Gary Bourgeois, Tony Van Den Akker **dialog. re-rec.** Richard Portman **gaf.** John Bartley **best boy (elec.)** Len Wolfe **key grip** Tim Hogan **best boy (grip)** John Scott **art d.** Richard Wilcox **construc. superv.** Ken Chang **art dept. asst.** Tom Braidwood **set dec.** Steve Shewchuk, Randi Johnson (asst.) **prop. mas.** Jimmy Chow **special efx** Michael Sullivan, Lee Routley, George Erschbamer **animal trainer** Gary Vaughan **word. design.** William Theiss **head of ward.** Christopher Ryan **ward. dress.** Jean Causey **make-up** Edward Ternes (for Kate Nelligan, James Coburn) ; Ken Brooke, Phyllis Newman **hair** Jim Keeler **catering** Location Cateress **craft services** Joanne Ryan **transp. co-ord.** Scott Irvine **driver capt.** Bob Bowe, Brian Boyer (co-capt.) **mus. asst. to Mr. Hoffert** Laurence Shragge **glass instruments** Eric Harry **l.p.** James Coburn, Kate Nelligan, Fionnula Flanagan, Les Carlsen, Candy Kane, Michael Kirby, Hugh Webster, Lin Griffith, Lois Maxwell, Alan McRae, Jan Rubes, Charles Jolifee, Ken Wickes, Tabitha Herrington, Laura Press, Cathryn Balk, Hagan Beggs, Paul Rothery, David Diamond, Blu Mankuma, Shirley Barcley, David Drowley, Daryl Hayes, John Vye, Gary Chalk, Lloyd Berry, Bobby Hanna, Rick Parker **p.c.** Film Consortium of Canada (1979) **col.** 35mm Panavision **running time** 105 min.

One of the most fascinating aspects of watching mid-level multinational productions (in this case, one American star, one Canadian star, one British character actress, British director and d.o.p.) is observing the interplay of well-known actors with people you have never seen before. In fact, the "unknown quantities" in these Canadian productions often provide some of the major pleasures in what are frequently awful films — Frances Hyland, for example, in **The Changeling**, blowing the comatose Trish Van Devere of the screen without even working up a sweat.

It is axiomatic that the performances of "stars" are often the same. For stars are not always stars because of talent, but rather chemistry. The ability to sustain a career is a bonus. James Coburn, the eponymous hero of John Guillermin's **Mr. Patman**, has never been the sort of star whose name guarantees the success of his project. Many of his most interesting projects — **Dead Heat on a Merry-go-round**, Peckinpah's **Pat Garret and Billy the Kid**, Herbert Ross's **The Last of Shiela**, have been his least successful. But he has a fascinating persona and sufficient star quality to often make him the best thing in bad pictures, offering sufficient justification for sitting through appalling messes like **Blood Kin**.

Coburn is certainly the best thing in **Mr. Patman**, but nevertheless, he faces competition from Fionnula Flanagan, who plays his landlady like some dementedly erotic avatar out of Sean O'Casey's more lurid wetdreams. The scenes between the two of them have an erotic charge seldom seen in Canadian films not featuring Carole Laure or Céline Lomez. They are certainly far more interesting than the scenes of Coburn with Kate Nelligan, his official girlfriend with whom he plans to depart at the film's conclusion.

Patman is a male nurse in a psychiatric ward of some major metropolitan hospital. He is not only a ringmaster who can work miracles with his patients, but also as they say, a devil with the lady's. This is the good part, and Coburn's performance is a whirligig of movement and expression. The plot's drama stems from the fact that our hero is "haunted by a terrible secret from his past" (gasp) and is prone to strange delusions which

Portrait of the radiant and the rugged: here, Kate Nelligan with **Mr. Patman** himself, James Coburn. photo: Phil Hersee

indicate that he is rapidly losing his tenuous grip on reality.

Thomas Hedley, author of the film's screenplay, is a good writer of scenes. His dialogue, give or take a few clunkers assigned to Kate Nelligan, tends to be excellent. However, like most writers today he has no sense of how to construct an original story. (When did you last see an American film with a truly coherent script? **Manhattan**, perhaps?) Consequently, he Cuisinarts together an assortment of elements from minor O'Casey, bad Snake-Pit-type films and lesser *films noirs*. The proof is that he gives his hero a cat — a sure sign of trying to pep up a script by giving the hero a number of interesting character quirks. The proof of Coburn's performance, and those of the supporting players, is that they can overcome it.

John Guillermin, the director, is one of those faceless technicians who made his reputation doing mindless spectacles for Irwin Allen and Dino DeLaurentiis. His presence is negligible, and while he does nothing to damage the film, nowhere in it does one sense any directorial urgency.

Mr. Patman should be seen for its cast and their performances. And for one other reason. It does not insult the viewer's intelligence: hardly a trivial consideration in a year which has seen such releases as **Bear Island, Happy Birthday, Gemini, Nothing Personal** and **Death Ship**. Simple intelligence is beginning to look like a major virtue.

John G. Harkness

Robin Spry's **Suzanne**

Suzanne *had its premiere screening at the Festival of Festivals in Toronto, and Marc Gervais was there to review it. Since that screening, the production has re-cut the film, and a shorter version is being used in its commercial release.* ***Cinema Canada*** *will publish a separate review of this second version of the film.*

d. Robin Spry **p.** Robert Lantos, Stephen J. Roth **sc.** Robin Spry, Ronald Sutherland based on "Snowlark" novel by Ronald Sutherland **assoc. p.** Wendy Grean **p. man.** Ted Holliday **d.o.p.** Miklos Lente **art d.** Vianney Gauthier, Claude Paré (asst.) **cost. design.** Louise Jobin **mus. comp.** François Cousineau **ed.** Fima Noveck **a.d.** Lise Abastado (1st), Yvon Arsenault (2nd), Blair Roth (3rd) **assist. cam.** David Douglas (1st), Mathieu Décary (2nd) **sd. mix.** Richard Lightstone **boom** Jim Thompson **unit, loc. man.** Lyse Lafontaine **prop. master** Ronald Fauteux **props buyer** Patrice Bengle **set props** Emmanuel Lépin, Nathalie Moliavko-Visotzky (asst.) **p. account.** Manon Bougie-Boyer **p. sec.** Françoise McNeil **asst. bookkeeper** Ruth Wener **key grip** Johnny Daoust **2nd grip** Pierre Charpentier **gaf.** Donald Sarri **best boy** Charles Hugues **elec.** Gérald Proulx **make-up** Michele Dion, Normande Campeau (asst.) **hair** Pierre David, Tom Booth (asst.) **asst. cost. designer, dresser** Johanne Prégent **asst. dresser** Andrée Jobin **script superv.** Monique Champagne **casting** Daniel Hausmann **pub.** David Novek **unit pub.** Lana Iny **stills** Attila Dory **exec. asst. to p.** Leila Basen **asst. editor** Sidonie Kerr **p.a.** Michel Turcot, Susan Schneir, Gérald Laniel, Michel English **add. cam.** Al Smith, Jean-Charles Tremblay **asst. to cameraman** Claude Simon Langlois **l.p.** Jennifer Dale, Winston Rekert, Gabriel Arcand, Ken Pogue, Michelle Rossignol, Marianne McIsaac, Michael Ironside, Gina Dick, Pierre Curzi, Gordon Thompson **p.c.** RSL Films Ltd. (1979) **col.** 35mm **running time** 105 min. **distrib.** Viva Film Ltd. (Que.), Ambassador Films Ltd. (English Canada).

Like it or not, certain films often find their way onto the public screens burdened with an enormous weight of expectation. Poor **Suzanne** falls into this category. Or perhaps one should say "fell." The moment of its première was ominously propitious. There we were in Toronto, jammed into the Elgin — one of the last of the posh old film houses — on one of its gala nights, right in the middle of the Festival of Festivals, with the Great Film Debate raging a few streets up (*cf.* the articles on Trade Forum '80, pages 13 to 16 in this issue). All that was asked for, nay, *demanded*, was that **Suzanne** be the Great Canadian Movie, the reconciling of genuine Canadian Concern with boffo box office.

The film community was intrigued, to put it mildly, by the creative mating between a world-respected director, Robin Spry — who for years has been considered English Canada's most socially involved feature film creator — and RSL, the dynamic young production team of Robert Lantos and Stephen Roth — whose aim has always been to "make it" on the big money market, and who are now "risking it," or "going cultural," or whatever, with a really *Canadian* Canadian Film. Everything in this production, from Ronald Sutherland's story right through to the actors and craftspeople (except maybe the final editor?) were the Genuine Canadian Article.

Given the magnitude of the expectations, **Suzanne** proved to be the Festival's major disappointment. Predictably, some of the criticism has been vitriolic. One review especially had the ring of almost personal hatred about it — or was the writer merely aspiring to becoming the John Simon of Canada? More importantly, **Suzanne** was used as living justification for one of the Trade Forum theses (or should one say the anti-thesis?), to wit, that the present entrepreneurial system is catastrophic, giving all the control to a group of producers who are *simply incapable of making a decent film*. "I mean, look at what happened *even* to Robin Spry...".

What is wrong with **Suzanne** is obvious, and has been underlined by the critics who have seen it. The movie *begins* brilliantly; and that, too, has been noted by some. Spry actually meets our (legitimate?) Spry expectations, setting up the clash of cultures in a pre-Quiet-Revolution Quebec. The three protagonists, beautifully played by Gabriel Arcand, Winston Rekert and especially Jennifer Dale, fairly explode as screen presences. An early dance sequence permits Spry to scale the heights of bravura lyricism, with a sweeping, lilting, celebratory camera, much more "Russian" in its feel than "Canadian," and certainly something new for a director whose stylistic approach has been typed as predominantly documentary.

Once again, Robin Spry demonstrates a marvelous sensitivity in his use of actors. Once again, too, he *feels* for the issues. And the locales, the places, are very much *de chez nous*. All of this is no small achievement, something beyond much recent Canadian work.

But the opening promises are not fulfilled. Or rather the initial premises or concerns become trivialized by heavy, stock type melodramatizing. So much so that by the end of the film we are immersed in a kind of turgid, ungenteel Harlequin Romance: will Suzanne marry the pure idealistic French Canadian (True Love) or the orgasmic Irish Canadian lout (Lust Perhaps Redeemable by Love)?

If this sounds like facile, cheap-shot caricaturing on my part, alas, the film itself caricatures its own melodramatic plot. Melodrama is not necessarily bad, however pejoratively the term may be used in the critic's arsenal of invective. Hollywood has a history of splendid melodramas. Think of **Casablanca**, think of Hitchcock's work, think of the many romantic stories featuring the likes of Garbo, Gable, etc., not to mention all the westerns, and thrillers...The point is that *bad* melodrama restricts itself to simplistic plot values, stock situations and characters, oversimplified themes, and tired, crude, sentimentalizing, "proven" cliché effects, calculated to elicit easy, unreflective, uncritical responses. Good melodramas play with their own conventions and clichés; they are *transformed*, made meaningful or magical, in any number of ways, by their wit/charm/irony/delicacy/humour, or technical wizardry and wild baroque explosiveness: or by their sense of involvement, vision, probing of mystery, or what have you.

Robin Spry's forte has never been, it seems to me, a lightness of touch, nor that sense of irony or humour. His very considerable strength lies in a passionate understanding of, and concern for people, and what is going on around him. **Prologue, One Man**, and **Drying Up the Streets** — not to mention the documentary **Action/Reaction** couplet — are among the strongest films yet produced in Canada precisely because the essential thrust — nourished by Spry's power of social analysis, and above all, by his anger and his agonizing and questing spirit — has not been undermined by those plot needs and easy effects that are supposed to attract mass audiences. Paradoxically perhaps, in these films, the counterpart to the tough social concern and story situation is totally convincing and moving. By that, I mean Spry's marvelous capturing of complex, subtle, deeply touching interpersonal relationships — part of which, of course, is what everyone refers to as the love interest, but which, in these good Spry movies, does not smack of manipulative cliché.

Suzanne, then, begins in exciting fashion, and the audience is swept along. But even at the beginning, the seeds of eventual loss of cinematic grace are in evidence. The character metaphors are a bit much: *Maman*, the vivacious *French*-Canadian whose *joie de vivre* finds expression in a strip-tease joint (!); and *Father, English*-Canadian, and hence dour, Scottish Presbyterian, and similar soul-withering things — so much so, that even so fine an actor as Ken Pogue seems vaguely uncomfortable with the role. Is this writer Sutherland's doing, or is it Spry's? (One mustn't forget that the same, false, self-serving Montreal cliché appeared more subtly in another Spry television film — scripted by Carmel Dumas — **Je me souviens**, where Louise Marleau/Franco/chi chi swingin'/"cultural" *Montreal* is opposed to Len Cariou/Anglo/dull, gray, ugly/soul-less business *Toronto*.)

And Winston Rekert is excellent in his re-creation (of sorts) of James Dean; but in this 1980 view of the fifties' type, a certain mature distancing — call it at least irony or wry awareness — has to be on the silver screen, otherwise the audience will laugh at the wrong moments (as it did at the Toronto Festival launching).

Whose were the final editing and mixing decisions in the making of **Suzanne**? Who souped up the sound track, magnifying — in the name of dramatic intensity? — all sorts of noises, overwhelming the various moments with blatant effect-music? (RSL seems to have recurring sound-recording problems. Another of its features, **Agency**, suffers from a dreadfully false conversational sound/tone.) One could go on, dredging up the *obvious* use of certain kinds of close-ups (now referred to by some way as the Lantos CU)...

The final conclusion, alas, is that yes, **Suzanne** does fall into melodrama — vulgar melodrama, that is. Far worse — and this is probably why I use the term "vulgar" melodrama — **Suzanne** becomes yet one more example of *Canadian Crude*, possibly the worst disease afflicting our feature film industry right now.

Is it all part of the reaction against our "artistic" films of the sixties, which set no box office records anywhere? Too many of our present films succumb to this dreadful affliction. Even our *best* contemporary efforts — a growing number are beginning to appear on our screens — tend to show its traces, thereby confirming the fact that our feature

Indian wrestling anyone ? Caught in a three-way stretch **Suzanne**'s Jennifer Dale, Gabriel Arcand (left) and Winston Rekert

film industry is anything but a class act.

An example, to clarify and exhibit the symptoms. I happened to see one of our better films, **Middle Age Crazy**, the same day I saw Robert Redford's **Ordinary People**. Now, neither movie is a master piece, to be sure ; but there is a difference in quality. Quite simply, the first film is laden with Canadian Crude, whereas Redford's first directorial effort is not. At every level — dialogue, acting style, camera work, sound and editing, in almost every artistic choice made by its creators — the Canadian effort comes out as cruder and more blatant. It is as if its creators felt they must *do things* to the central theme or story, resorting to cheap effects to win the audience. Redford and Co., on the other hand, seem to trust their material, its essential humanity and appeal, and their audience.

RSL is one of our most dynamic production houses. But, like so many of our other production units, it repeatedly succumbs. Where oh where have sensitivity, nuance, wit, a true sense of quality and style, disappeared to ? Where are those values that precisely inform the best American work ? RSL's **In Praise of Older Women** had so many truly fine things in it : it *could* have been a brilliant, bitter/sweet essay in the tradition of any number of film creators in, say, France or Czechoslovakia. Instead, it thudded its way into crudeness. And the same can be said, *mutatis mutandis*, about **Suzanne**.

The more I think about it, the more severe I find myself becoming concerning Robin Spry's latest effort. The film community as a whole seems to share this attitude. However, it has to be admitted that a good section of that packaged Toronto gala audience felt much more positively about the movie. It is conceivable, I suppose, that **Suzanne** may find some market out there, that it may have enough going for it — its energy, skills, fine performances, youth identification, even its Canadian Crude quality — to appeal to a jaded, perpetual-adolescent market, or some other naive market. **Suzanne** may even manage to get most of its money back. But what about the general disappointment surrounding it ? Is that all there is... Robin ?

It would be all too easy, and destructive, to end this piece with a whimper, or worse still, to magnify one's lack of enchantment into an over-all condemnation of the present situation. Rather, let the film serve as one more *irresistible, unavoidable* call to the Canadian feature film establishment to do some serious, far-reaching re-thinking. RSL and the other Canadian producers had better study their own track records. Somehow, the idea has to get across that in the big leagues mass appeal need not be equated with playing down to the audience, and that real professional *quality* is a far more viable product than Canadian Crude. Producers certainly have a creative role to play, but they are *not* the be-all and end-all, the supreme arbiters of artistic quality in a film, nor the sole judges of its mass appeal.

None of this contradicts the real contribution of RSL to the Canadian film scene. The energy and dedication of Roth/Lantos & Co. have helped to make things go. And it is RSL who plunged into an all-Canadian film adventure, a risky business indeed in the game as it is now played. Almost all of their undertakings, it must be admitted, have had a touch of adventurousness about them, at one level or another. And with experience and growing expertise, given the initial energy and dedication... tout est possible.

As for Robin Spry, among whose admirers the present writer must be numbered, he is now, for better or for worse, launched in the private sector. Despite its shortcomings, **Suzanne** has revealed some new and exciting aspects of Spry's talent. He is presently at work on a new feature. Besides, wasn't it Aristotle, or some other Greek who said that Canadian film directors cannot hope to be *real* feature filmmakers until after forty ? Spry was born in 1939. So, in spite of his already distinguished record, one may venture to say that his best work is still ahead.

Marc Gervais

Michael Grant's **Head On**

d./p. Michael Grant **p.** Alan Simmonds **script** James Sanderson, Paul Illidge **d.o.p.** Anthony Richmond, b.s.c. **p. design.** Antonin Dimitrov **mus.** Peter Mann **ed.** Gary Oppenheimer **assoc. p.** Isabel Beveridge **casting** Karen Hazzard (Can.), TNI Casting (U.S.) **p. man.** Sally Dundas **p. sec.** Oni Freeman **p. account.** Wayne Arron **a.d.** Mac Bradden (1st), John Board (1st), David Storey (2nd), Dan McIlravey (3rd) **assist. to p.** Daphne Grant **assist. cam.** Robin Miller (1st), Carl Harvey (2nd) **loc. man.** Randy Tambling **cont.** Gillian Richardson **ward. design.** Tam Southam, Paula Munck **ward. mistress** Gurteen Cohen **Ms. Kellerman's dresser** Suzanna Ploughright **set dec.** Enrico Campana, Elinor Galbraith, Sarah Gould (asst.) **set dress. assist.** Gareth Wilson **art d. sec.** Judith Keeler **art d. driver** Benjamin Hayden **Winnebago driver** Neil Huhta **props** Linda McClelland, Ed Hanna (asst.), Allyn Terry (driver) **make-up** Suzanne Benoit **hair** Bruce Appleby **gaf.** Jock Brandis **best boy** Douglas Allen **1st elec.** Gary Phipps **key grip** Carlo Campana **assist. grip** Dennis Thompson (1st), Greg Pelchat (2nd) **sd. rec.** Ian Hendry **boom** Dave Joliat **2nd unit cam.** Bob New **Stedicam op.** Robin Miller **stunts** Bobby Hanna, Ken Porter, Wayne Thurston **sd. efx.** Gary Oppenheimer **dialog. ed.** Catherine Lane **efx. rec.** Andy Malcolm **assist. ed.** Elaine Hurwitz, Michele Cook

rec., mix. Joe Grimaldi, Dave Appleby, Dino Pigat **mus. arrange. /conduct.** Bobby Edwards **theme sung by** Dawn Aitken **"Barnacle Rag" comp. by** Ben Mink **perform. by** Johnathan Goldsmith, Ben Mink (courtesy of Passport Records) **unit pub.** Molly Thom **stills** John Phillips **tech. advisor** Kay Aoyama (fencing), Gerald C. Cupchik (psych.) **sculpture by** Kosso Eloul **title design** Paula Munck **l.p.** Sally Kellerman, Stephen Lack, John Huston, Lawrence Dane, John Peter Linton, Patrick Crean, Marty Galin, Joann McIntyre, Sheilah Currie, Sandra Scott, Harry Kumano, Kunio Suyama, Hadley Kay, Mina E. Mina, Al Bernardo, Jim Coates, Wendy Creed, Ardon Bess, Maxwell Moffett, Robert Silverman, Tony Moffat-Lynch, James Kidney, Catherine Vaneri, Nick Nichols, Rummy Bishop, Martin Donlevy, Dan Bradley, Anne de Villiers **p.c.** Michael Grant Productions Ltd. (1979) **col.** 35mm **running time** 98 min.

Head On is not a nice movie. But being nice has been precisely the problem with so many Canadian films. Conservative in style and content, they may be respectable, but rarely are they exciting. **Head On** careens and careers all over the place, often to little effect, but no one can accuse it of being uninteresting.

It tells the story of a professor of abnormal psychology, Peter Hill (Stephen Lack), and a child therapist, Michelle Keys (Sally Kellerman), who meet when their almost identical Mercedes sportscars collide head on. Their unusual introduction leads to an affair characterized by a series of violent and sardonic fantasy games.

Sex and romance are popular film themes, but only infrequently are they examined with any originality or subtlety. Many contemporary "adult" films are largely insult comedies, with lots of hilarious yelling and screaming, scenes of people caught outdoors in their underwear, but without a glimpse of real emotion, or an understanding of why people do and don't love one another. One thinks of the banal shtick of **Willie and Phil**, the boring pretensions of **Heartbeat**, the brainlessness of **Nothing Personal**. **Head On** treads dangerously in this direction, but is saved from dumb oblivion by its inventiveness and unpredictability.

Early in the film, Lack hears a radio report of the landing on earth of intelligent aliens. If one interprets this as a clue — it must have been included in the script for a reason — it suggests that the world this couple inhabits is unreal, one in which anything can happen. (**Head On**'s advertising uses the phrase "expect the unexpected.") Seen in this light, their fantasy games can be understood as metaphors for the intangible games couples play daily.

In one scene, for example, Kellerman arranges for Lack to be picked up by a chauffeur, driven to her husband's office after hours, and outfitted as her spouse. She then enters to "confess" her affair with Lack, an inspired way of simultaneously expressing both regret and joy at her infidelity.

Occasionally, however, the film lapses into sentimentality. By choosing a happy ending, the filmmakers missed the opportunity to maintain a consistent, if macabre, tone. In another scene, following their separation after a disasterously unsuccessful game, the protagonists meet again. As they stroll along the waterfront, Lack says, "We lost what we had light years ago." Although they both exchange sarcastic witticisms of the highest order, the scene doesn't quite ring true. In fact, their reunion seems to be less an outcome of the characters' desires than of the screenwriters' wish to continue the story.

The casting of the two principals is perfect. Kellerman, who is frequently restricted to roles in which she is required to only look sex-starved (her characters in **Foxes, Serial, Loving Couples** for example), brings the necessary warmth and intelligence to Michelle Keys. Stephen Lack lives up to his entertainingly eclectic performance in **The Rubber Gun**, and along with Donald Sutherland, may be the actor most capable of expressing a sophisticated and quick intelligence on screen. John Huston, as Lack's artist-father, is engaging, even if his character is irrelevant.

Head On was shot in and around Toronto, and is, surprisingly, actually *set* there. But the filmmakers have admirably avoided making this explicit. Instead, they have presented the city in glimpses, creating a "look" that is identifiably Toronto-esque, yet also quietly surreal in keeping with the script. In fact, **Head On**'s greatest virtue is its insistence on the viewer's participation, its refusal to spell everything out. It may be thanks to Brian DePalma, and films like **Sleuth,** that **Head On** is not easily classifiable — which is good.

Gerry Flahive

In Sally Kellerman's eyes, Head On's John Huston is a first-rate sculptor.

CFMDC Short Film Selection

On Thursday, September 4 (opening night of the Festival of Festivals), the Canadian Filmmakers Distribution Centre presented an intriguing selection of short 16 mm films at the Science Centre's Ontario Film Theatre. Notable among them were Robert McLachlan's **An Egg Story**, Drew Morey's **This is the Title of My Film**, and three animated one-minute pieces, **Animals, Specimen,** and **Night Time.**

●

Originally conceived as a promotional film for a client in the B.C. egg industry, **An Egg Story** lost its financial support when it was half finished, so it was completed independently by Robert McLachlan. In keeping with his original intent, McLaughlan has produced an entertaining, informative film about eggs. It also contains some nice, light touches of satire.

The film begins in the kitchen of a large restaurant, where serious voice-over narration announces a government-sponsored contest to find The Perfect Food. This inspires a goofy, gullible, underdog chef, Norman, to embark on a quest for the perfect egg. Not content simply to *choose* a perfect egg, he must *breed* it; which of course affords the filmmaker the "perfect" opportunity to expose the viewer to every aspect of egg production. We follow Chef Norman ("My name's Chef Norman...perhaps you've heard of me?") to the henhouse, where a farmer humours him by choosing the finest egg from among thousands for him. But at the hatchery, the chick from Norman's egg is accidentally lost in the crowd. He assumes that the one he receives is from his extraordinary egg, and christens her Margaret. When Margaret reaches maturity, Norman ecstatically fondles her first egg, the perfect offspring of the perfect hen. However, in his excitement he loses the egg on a conveyor belt which bears it, with the letter 'M' marked on its shell, into the sorting/packaging facilities. Norman dashes frantically around among eggs in various stages of processing — uniform rows of virginal, fresh eggs reflecting in his glasses. Finally, a fork-lift operator takes pity on him, writes an 'M' on the shell of an anonymous egg, and hands it to the credulous chef.

Norman's egg is judged in a laboratory setting by two scientists who, as they come to their decision, manage to enumerate the egg's most attractive attributes — plentiful, delicious, nutritious, versatile, etc. Chef Norman's "Eggs, Any Style" becomes the official food of the Prime Minister, indignant citizens complain about the government wasting money to come to such an obvious conclusion, and the officials reply, of course, that it was worth it.

The occasional intervention of the narrator's voice over the story of Norman Odyssey adds a mock-serious documentary note to the film. Deft editing to the rhythm of a lively, Haydn violin

opus lends a sophisticated, delicate mood, at once humorous and appropriate, to the various stages of egg production. Both the direction and editing of **An Egg Story** reinforce the combined comic and documentary aspects of it, sustaining a sense of the absurd urgency of Norman's mission and the indifference of the chicken/egg industry to it. The various environments of kitchen, farm, and hatchery are rendered accurately and sympathetically, and Norman's ebullient, bug-eyed wonder keeps most of the film's sequences fresh and amusing.

This Is The Title of My Film is a delightfully subversive black-and-white parody of soap operas, which also examines and satirizes predictable dramatic constructions, the mechanics of emotional manipulation in film and life, and the craft of filmmaking itself. Like a Beckett play, the film suggests that "all men talk, when talk they must, the same tripe," but this attitude is expressed in a style which provokes belly laughter and snickers rather than the mirthless smile.

The dialogue of the entire film consists of exquisite one-line descriptions of a soapy script, delivered dramatically, complete with verbal sound effects of the iron on the ironing board, the door slamming, the phone ringing, etc. Here is an approximate sample of the screenplay:

SHE answers the phone saying...)
"Rring!" (grinning brightly) "Greetings. Meaningless inane chatter concerning the weather. Subtle innuendo about relations with caller; distinct sexual undertones." (sexy smile)

The direction is punchy and relentless, the acting nicely restrained and well-timed for comic and melodramatic effect. Everything is effectively combined to give bite and savour to the ironies in the script. The final credit echoes the self-descriptive statement of the film's title — "Director's Name". The principal, creative contribution to the film apparently came from Drew Morey.

The animated short, **Animals**, illustrates a poet's subjective, nostalgic comparison of the green world of wild animals and the urban world of men. The animal-filled forest, where curious bears are less threatening than human vandals, gives way to the angular, menacing architecture of the city. The poet/narrator looks back upon her fear in an underground parking lot, confronted by a beast of the urban jungle. A grisly bear rises up snarling from behind a parked car, and its features metamorphose until it becomes a threatening city punk. The poet comments finally that this apparition was "most fearsome for what in it was man," as word and picture meld into a succinct, provocative image of the dark side of human nature.

Specimen opens with garishly tinted, animated, still photos of a couple laughing and walking in a park. Gradually the man walks ahead, leaving the woman looking after. The narrator is a female voice which becomes more venomous as the images advance, eventually ending with her avowal that, although he is gone, she still possesses him in photographs — preserved in emulsion/formaldehyde. This corresponds to a freeze-frame portrait, which takes its place in a gallery of several male faces arranged in rows. **Specimen** is a bizarre, choppy little piece which exposes the camera as a potentially perverse instrument, actually capable of lovelessly stealing a part of the subject's soul. It also illustrates a potential for emotional bankrupcy, and a demonic addiction to variety, two prevalent dangers in sexual politics since the revolution.

Using the technique of glass painting, **Night Time** explores a child's nightmare in fluid images which are at once sinister and ephemeral. A child's fears are imaged as dark, colourful, and unstable. Amoebic monsters emerge from a toilet bowl to swallow the dreamer, and other creatures loom and threaten. The dreamer runs, looking hauntingly like the desperate soul in Edvard Munch's lithograph, "The Cry". The title and credit, which do not appear until the end of the piece, come like an almost gratuitous note of objectivity.

Chris Lowry

Yes, cinema canada is the only monthly film magazine in Canada

Be part of the Canadian film scene

cinema canada

is the mirror of a growing film industry with articles on films in production, profiles on young filmmakers, in-depth interviews with those who make the news, film reviews and book reviews and tech news

Be part of its past:

The entire collection of Cinema Canada is available in hard-bound volumes

Issues 1 through 7	$45 (sold out)
Issues 8 through 14	$35
Issues 15 through 20	$40
Issues 21 through 30	$30
Issues 31 through 40	$30
Issues 41 through 50	$30
Issues 51 through 59	$30

present:

Recent issues include No. 56: "The F.B.I. Files on John Grierson" ($1.25), No. 60/61: "Canadian Composers and Music for the Movies" ($2.50), No. 62: "Documentaries Underwater and Abroad" ($1.25)

future:

Make the '80s the Cinema Canada decade
Subscribe!

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ Postal Code _____

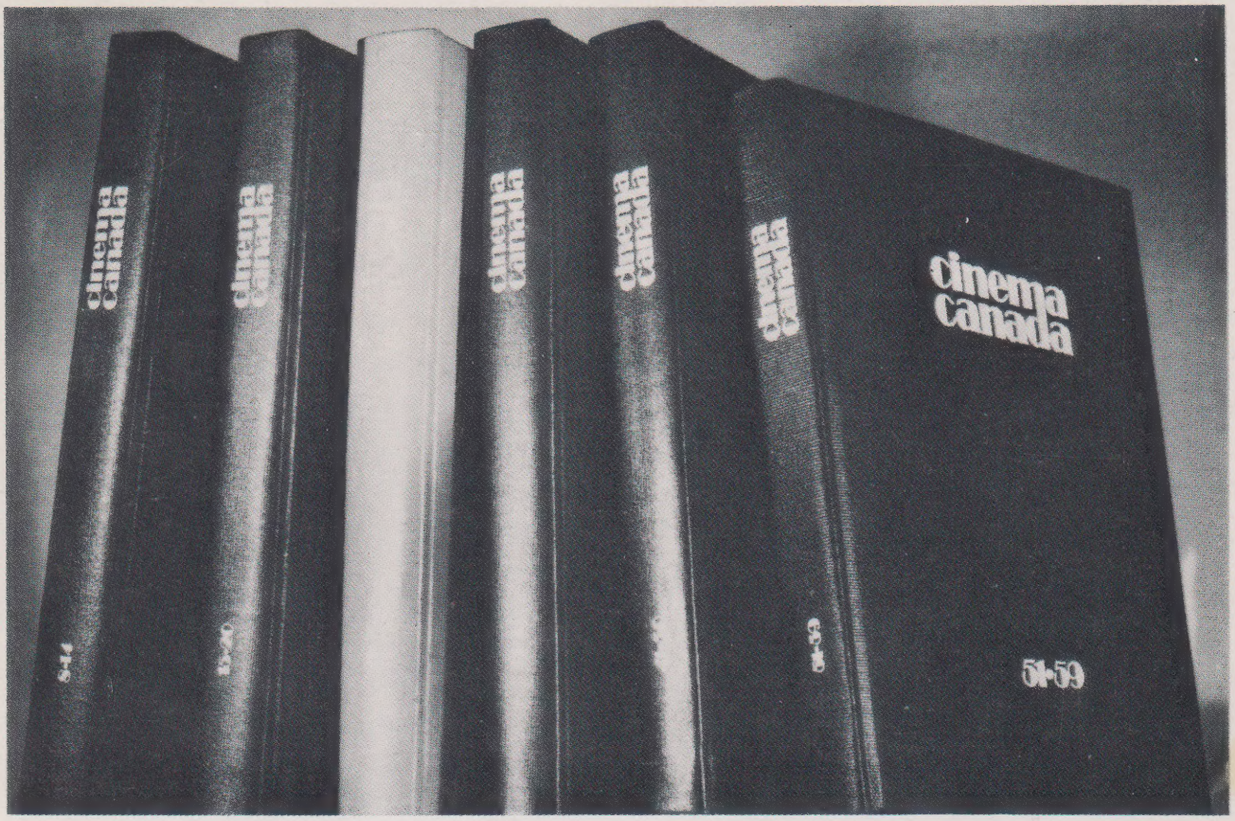
1 year (10 issues). Individuals $10. Companies and institutions $15.

☐ Payment enclosed
☐ Bill me. Purchase order No. _____
☐ Bill my Visa account No. _____
Expiry date _____
Signature _____

Toronto office:
67 Portland St.
Toronto, M5V 2M9
(416) 366-0355

Montreal office:
Box 398,
Outremont Station,
Montreal H2V 4N3
(514) 272-5354

The Way We Were
1972-1979



cinema canada

Bound Volumes Now In Stock

Canadian film... what it is, what it was. What films, organizations, policies and personalities paved the way for the present boom ? Together, the volumes document the road we have traveled. The distant past, the recent past, the film policies which have shaped our industry... comment and opinion.

Almost without exception, Cinema Canada has reviewed every feature film produced in Canada and many of the important short films. It has reviewed and books and the technical innovations...

Catch Up Today !

(Please check the volumes you wish to order, and enclose your cheque or money order.)

(check here)

Vol. I *SOLD OUT*
Vol. 2 (Limited edition of 100, Nos 8-14) $35 ☐
Vol. 3 (Limited edition of 60, Nos. 15-20) $40 ☐
Vol. 4 (Limited edition of 200, Nos. 21-30) $20 ☐
Vol. 5 (Limited edition of 200, Nos. 31-40) $20 ☐
Vol. 6 (Limited edition of 200, Nos. 41-50) $20 ☐
Vol. 7 (Limited edition of 200, Nos. 51-59) $20 ☐

TOTAL _____

Name _____

Address _____

_____

Postal Code _____ Telephone _____

Return to:
Cinema Canada
Box 398, Outremont Station
Montréal, Québec H2V 4N3 Canada
Tel: (514) 272-5354